

# East Rockville Neighborhood Plan

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## **Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **Purpose**

The primary purpose for preparing a new neighborhood plan for the East Rockville neighborhood is to provide an opportunity for neighborhood residents to plan for the community's future. This need was identified during the planning process for the Town Center Master Plan. That effort, which included the Stonestreet Avenue corridor because it is within the Town Center Planning Area, focused on the core of Town Center but included recommendations with significant implications for the adjacent East Rockville community in terms of redevelopment and traffic. The Mayor and Council ultimately determined that the Stonestreet corridor and the eastern portion of the Metro site should be included as part of a new East Rockville Neighborhood Plan.

The neighborhood planning process affords the community an opportunity to address other issues and concerns as well. The previous neighborhood plan was adopted in 1982 and provided guidance for an extended period of time. However, an updated neighborhood plan will be the blueprint for the future that will guide public and private decisions for East Rockville in the foreseeable future. By responding to changes taking place near the community, the community has seized the opportunity to make positive change, both within and outside of the neighborhood, happen.

### **Planning Area**

The East Rockville neighborhood has been a stable and secure community for many years. Members of the community have expressed a strong connection and identification with the community, in some cases for generations. It is the intent of this Plan to help maintain this for future generations.

With few exceptions, the predominant land use within the community has been single-family homes. Because of the origins of the community in the 1890s, and with home construction occurring primarily in the 1940s and 1950s but continuing through the 1990s, the community has acquired a diversity of home styles and sizes that is unique to Rockville. In many ways this has contributed to the "home-town" neighborhood-feel of the community cherished by both longtime and newly arrived residents. In addition, the majority of homes in the neighborhood are owner-occupied, also contributing to the connection and affection that many residents feel for the community.

As defined by the 2002 *Comprehensive Master Plan*, the East Rockville Planning Area (Planning Area 2) is just east of Rockville's Town Center, and is bounded generally by First Street/Norbeck Road (MD 28) on the east, Veirs Mill Road on the South, the Stonestreet industrial corridor and Rockville Metro station on the west, and the Lincoln Park neighborhood and Southlawn industrial area on the north. For the purposes of this Neighborhood Plan, the Stonestreet Study Area (shown in Figure 1), which incorporates both the Stonestreet industrial corridor and the eastern portion of the Rockville Metro



Figure 1. East Rockville Planning Area



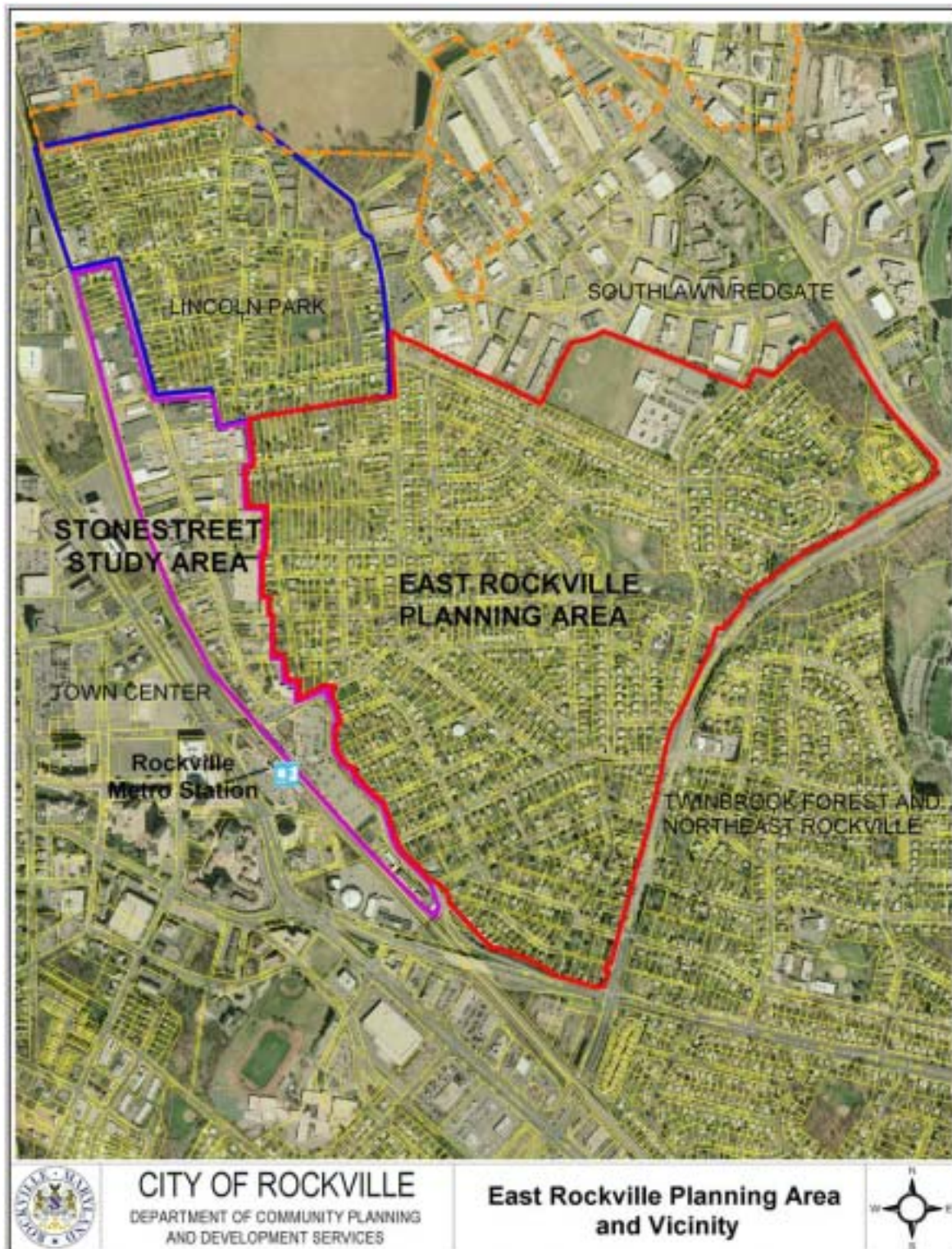


Figure 2. Aerial View of East Rockville Planning Area and Vicinity

station, is considered to be part of the East Rockville Planning Area. The East Rockville residential neighborhoods comprise approximately 333 acres of land. Over 90 percent of the land area is single-family detached homes, totaling 1,009 households. An additional 56 single family attached units (townhouses) are also in the planning area. The planning area population was approximately 3,300 in Census 2000.

## History

Rockville began at an important crossroads in Montgomery County - at the junction of the main road from Georgetown to Frederick, and the road that led from Poolesville to Annapolis. In 1860, Rockville was incorporated as a city by an act of the Maryland General Assembly, enabling the citizens to collect and disburse funds for improvement of the common good, regulate growth, legislate to maintain order, and provide the town certain rights and privileges in its dealings with the State and County. It also annexed 73 acres to the city, for a total of 133 acres, which included a population of 365 people.

When the Metropolitan Branch of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad reached Rockville in 1873, it provided a direct transportation link to the greater metropolitan areas of Washington and Baltimore and stimulated the growth of the city. During the two decades following the arrival of the B&O railroad, Rockville annexed an additional 88 acres. The City was considered attractive, healthful, and provided a pleasant escape from the Washington, D.C. summer heat.

Prior to 1888, the East Rockville neighborhood was a rural area adjacent to the Town of Rockville. The arrival of the railroad was the catalyst for the transformation of the outlying farmlands into neighborhoods. The form of early suburban development in East



Figure 3. Rockville Park subdivision plan (1893)



Rockville was established with the subdivision known as *Reading's 1<sup>st</sup> Addition to Rockville*, platted in March 1888.

While this subdivision was replatted with smaller lots in 1893 as *Rockville Park*, the overall form of the original subdivision was retained. Included in this subdivision were the streets known as Maple, Grandin, Reading and Stonestreet Avenues, the latter of which was named for Dr. E. E. Stonestreet.<sup>1</sup> noted Rockville physician from 1852 to 1903, and former landowner in the area.



Figure 4. 700 Grandin Avenue

New homeowners and real estate speculators built early Victorian cottages of varying sizes and design. Often, the new homes were on large properties assembled by the purchase of multiple lots. Porches, large windows, and garden space around the homes were part of the suburban appeal.

The Rockville Park subdivision was part of the first large annexation (126 acres) adopted by the Town of Rockville in 1896. At this time, Rockville was a small town along the B&O Railroad line with a small commercial business district and an expanding residential market fueled by the railroad. Some of these homes survive as architecturally interesting and historically significant touchstones for the neighborhood. Rockville's first suburban expansion peaked around 1890 and by 1900 was in decline, as the overall population dropped about 30 percent.

The neighborhoods east and west of Rockville's central business district became the expansion area for housing during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Subdivisions such as Janeta (1914), Croydon Park (1924), England's Second Addition (1926) and Harriet Park (1941) were carved out of the existing farmland during this period. One of the former farmhouses, Chestnut Grove at 1 Lawrence Court, was operated as a children's

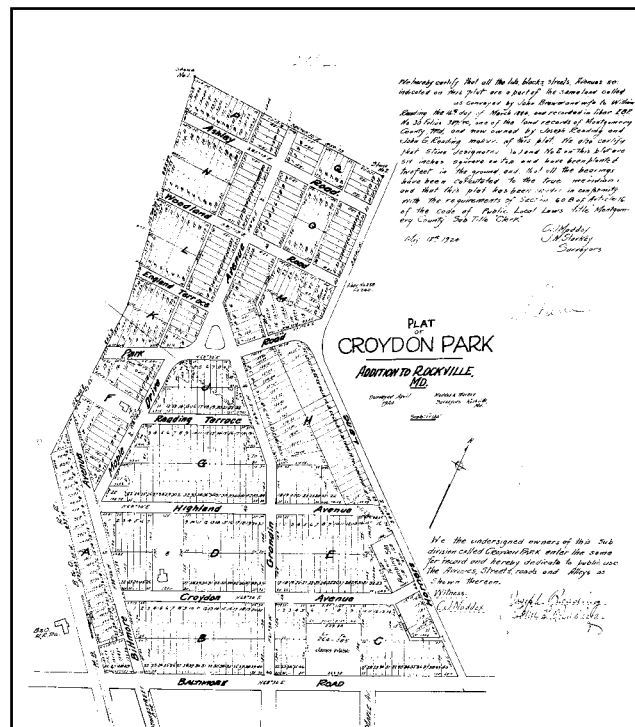


Figure 5. Croydon Park subdivision plat (1924)

<sup>1</sup> Dr. E.E. Stonestreet was a noted Rockville physician from 1852-1903, and a former area landowner.

convalescent home for many years. The next major housing expansion occurred during and immediately after the conclusion of World War II, adding new neighborhoods such as Brown's Addition to Harriett Park (1946), Maryvale (1951), Burgundy Hills (1952), Burgundy Village (1952) and Burgundy Knolls (1955). These subdivisions were created prior to implementation of the City's modern Zoning Ordinance of 1957. By the 1960s, most of East Rockville had been completed with single-family housing. A second section of Burgundy Knolls, including Redgate Farms, was developed in the 1970s, and the Charles Walk townhouse community was developed in the mid-1980s. Because the neighborhood was built over an extended time period, it contains a variety of lot sizes and home styles.

Residential development, viewed as a process of history, provides a three-dimensional picture of life, including families' spatial needs, aesthetic values, and construction techniques, among other things. The few non-residential buildings in East Rockville also testify to historic events, such as the typhoid epidemic of 1913-1914. The Croydon Park Pumphouse, on South Horners Lane, was the primary pumping station for the water supply of 90% of the City's population in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Served by two deep wells nearby, the water supply distribution system unfortunately was constructed in advance of proper residential waste disposal. This was identified as the source for the spread of typhus by Dr. E. E. Stonestreet. The City took immediate action in 1914, working under the guidance of the U.S. Public Health Service, in constructing a public sewerage system that became a model for small municipalities across the country.

## Planning History

City-sponsored comprehensive planning for East Rockville began during the 1950s when a *Master Plan for the Stonestreet Avenue Area* was developed. This Plan, published in 1957, intended to provide for coordinated light industrial development including research and development (R&D) facilities in the Stonestreet corridor, contrasting with the random development that had taken place to that time. The Plan also intended to protect the adjacent residential neighborhood through better industrial standards as well as street closings and realignments that were intended to separate industrial and residential traffic. A *Comprehensive Plan for Rockville*, the first for a Maryland city, was created and adopted in 1960. That Plan detailed the future residential growth of Rockville through the development of new self-contained neighborhoods, and encouraged the protection of existing residential communities like East Rockville.

The 1970 *Master Plan for Rockville* divided the City into fifteen neighborhood planning areas, including the planning area known as Croydon Park, now called East Rockville (Planning Area 2). The 1970 *Master Plan* sought to maintain established neighborhoods and eliminate haphazard commercial, industrial, and incompatible non-residential development. The *Croydon Park Neighborhood Plan* was adopted in 1982 as one of the first neighborhood efforts in the City to integrate local concerns with long

range planning policies. The neighborhood plan recognized the area as more than a geographic location, and also noted that it included employment and retail shopping opportunities in close proximity to residences. The *Croydon Park Neighborhood Plan* had as its basic objective the preservation and enhancement of the defined neighborhood as it then existed, with no commercial, industrial or incompatible residential encroachment. Rockville's 1993 *Approved and Adopted Master Plan* continued the concept of neighborhood planning areas, and reaffirmed the findings of the 1982 *Croydon Park Neighborhood Plan*. Specific recommendations for Planning Area 2 (Croydon Park) included support for neighborhood stability and outlined potential concerns about adjacent non-residential areas. The 2002 *Comprehensive Master Plan* for Rockville reaffirmed that infill development, adjacent industrial areas and traffic issues are major concerns. That Plan also recommended updating the 1982 neighborhood plan. The community had long been asking for traffic relief, but there had been none.

### **Relationship with Town Center Master Plan**

The East Rockville Planning Area, which is almost entirely residential, abuts the Town Center Planning Area, which contains the North Stonestreet Avenue industrial corridor, the Rockville Metro station and industrial properties on South Stonestreet Avenue. Planning within this area typically would be through policies contained in the *Town Center Master Plan*, which was adopted by the Mayor and Council in 2001 with the help of a Master Plan Advisory Group and consultant team. That Plan's goal envisions Town Center as a 24 hour center that is "... easily identifiable, pedestrian-oriented, and incorporating a mix of uses and activities." Town Center redevelopment will be within walking distance to the Rockville Metro station, and will also impact the quality of life in surrounding neighborhoods, and particularly East Rockville.

During the development of the *Town Center Master Plan*, it became apparent that the land areas east of the Metro/CSX tracks were impacted. The East Rockville neighborhood abuts the Metro/CSX tracks and Town Center. For this reason, the Mayor and Council determined that a new neighborhood plan would be developed for the East Rockville and Lincoln Park neighborhoods. Any zoning changes or other recommendations affecting the neighborhood would be part of the recommendations for the new neighborhood plans. This represented a major commitment on the part of the City and the neighborhood to address cooperatively the issues and concerns of the community, especially in the Stonestreet corridor.

Specific recommendations of the Town Center Master Plan that relate to East Rockville include:

- ## Build additional pedestrian connections between Town Center and East Rockville;
- ## Reduce traffic impacts on East Rockville;
- ## Introduce sympathetic design elements that connect Town Center and new development;

- €# Promote mixed-use development that combines residential with retail and office in the Stonestreet corridor;
- €# Initiate more efficient land use in the vicinity of the Metro Station; and
- €# Revise traffic patterns at the Metro Station.

The East Rockville Neighborhood Plan expands on the fundamental concepts of the *Comprehensive Master Plan* for Rockville, adopted in 2002, the previous *Croydon Park Neighborhood Plan* of 1982 and the *Town Center Master Plan*, adopted in 2001. It should be noted that the neighborhood planning area boundaries shown in the 1982 Plan were modified by the *Comprehensive Master Plan* with the addition of the Burgundy Knolls and Redgate Farms residential neighborhoods roughly between First Street, East Gude Drive and Norbeck Road in the northeastern corner of the planning area.

### East Rockville Neighborhood Planning Process

The Neighborhood Planning process for East Rockville began with a Community Kickoff Meeting for neighborhood residents. City planning staff completed a neighborhood inventory and compiled background information in preparation for the meeting. The meeting was held on April 4, 2002. Approximately 130 residents and property owners attended.

The purpose of the Community Kickoff Meeting was to introduce the concept of the East Rockville Neighborhood Plan, provide an opportunity for residents to become involved in the planning process, and to solicit information regarding residents' current views of the neighborhood (strengths and weaknesses) and desires for the future (threats and opportunities). Those attending were also asked to serve as volunteers on the Neighborhood Plan Advisory Group.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>€# Location near Rockville Town Center, Metro and jobs</li> <li>€# Safe and stable community with affordable single family homes</li> <li>€# Community spirit</li> <li>€# City Services</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>€# Traffic – frequency, noise and speed</li> <li>€# Commercial cut-through traffic</li> <li>€# Inadequate property maintenance and code enforcement</li> <li>€# Incompatible and unattractive industrial uses nearby</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>€# Improving neighborhood streets by reducing cut-through traffic and adding pedestrian connections</li> <li>€# Improve property maintenance</li> <li>€# Redevelopment of North Stonestreet Avenue with more compatible neighborhood uses</li> <li>€# City Services</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Challenges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>€# Increased traffic</li> <li>€# Expansion of industrial and institutional properties</li> <li>€# Redevelopment increasing traffic, density and parking</li> </ul>
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Appendix 2, the Community Kickoff Meeting Summary, provides a complete record of the meeting results.

### Neighborhood Plan Advisory Group

In May 2002, the Mayor and Council appointed volunteer members of the Neighborhood Plan Advisory Group to guide the development of the neighborhood plan. The Advisory Group consisted of neighborhood residents, one commercial property owner in the Stonestreet Study Area, and a representative of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). The Group held its first meeting in late June 2002, and met approximately every other week through Spring 2003. The Group reviewed the Background Report compiled by City staff (See Appendix 1), as well as the Community Kickoff Meeting summary (See Appendix 2) to learn factual information about the Planning Area prior to beginning discussions.

The Advisory Group identified five major areas of interest and organized itself into subcommittees to address these: Stonestreet corridor, Metro, Zoning, Transportation and Environment. The subcommittees researched relevant information, conducted interviews and discussions with pertinent individuals, analyzed alternatives, and developed recommendations for their respective areas. The larger Advisory Group met bi-weekly to gather and analyze information, discuss findings of the respective subcommittees, highlight potential areas of conflict, and reach consensus on recommendations for the Plan. This process fostered considerable dialogue among the subcommittees as issues were considered.



*Figure 6. Advisory Group members present the Plan recommendations to the community at the March 2003 Community Meeting*

The Advisory Group also met with the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan Advisory Group, which was updating its neighborhood plan. These joint meetings provided the opportunity to discuss common areas and to cooperatively resolve issues.

The Advisory Group hosted a Community Meeting at Maryvale Elementary School in March 2003 to present the Plan recommendations to the East Rockville community at large. Advisory Group members gave an overview of the Plan

and outlined the recommendations of each subcommittee. Community members could discuss issues and ask questions of subcommittee members at booths that contained maps and other graphics in support of each area of interest. Feedback from the Community Meeting was primarily positive, and the Advisory Group reviewed the feedback for incorporation into the neighborhood plan.

The Advisory Group reviewed and subsequently revised the draft Neighborhood Plan in April and May 2003, and recommended a draft document for consideration by the Planning Commission and Mayor and Council.

## Neighborhood Vision

The Advisory Group considered various vision statements, including the Goal from the 1982 *Croydon Park Neighborhood Plan*. Ultimately, the Advisory Group determined that the Plan should have four primary goals, as follows:

### East Rockville Neighborhood Plan Goals

- ≠# **The East Rockville community wishes to retain its existing sense of identity as a quiet, secure, residential neighborhood.**
- ≠# **The East Rockville community supports the redevelopment of the Stonestreet Corridor, as defined by the East Rockville Neighborhood Plan.**
- ≠# **Appropriate buffers around the neighborhood must ensure the neighborhood's identity.**
- ≠# **All other land uses adjacent to East Rockville must enhance the community.**

These statements express the desires of the community, via the Advisory Group, and form the basis for the objectives and recommendations of the East Rockville Neighborhood Plan. The following Desired Framework diagram represents the basic concepts outlined in the following chapters: redevelopment of the Stonestreet corridor and Rockville Metro station, retention of the East Rockville residential community, and major circulation routes and new pedestrian and vehicular connections.



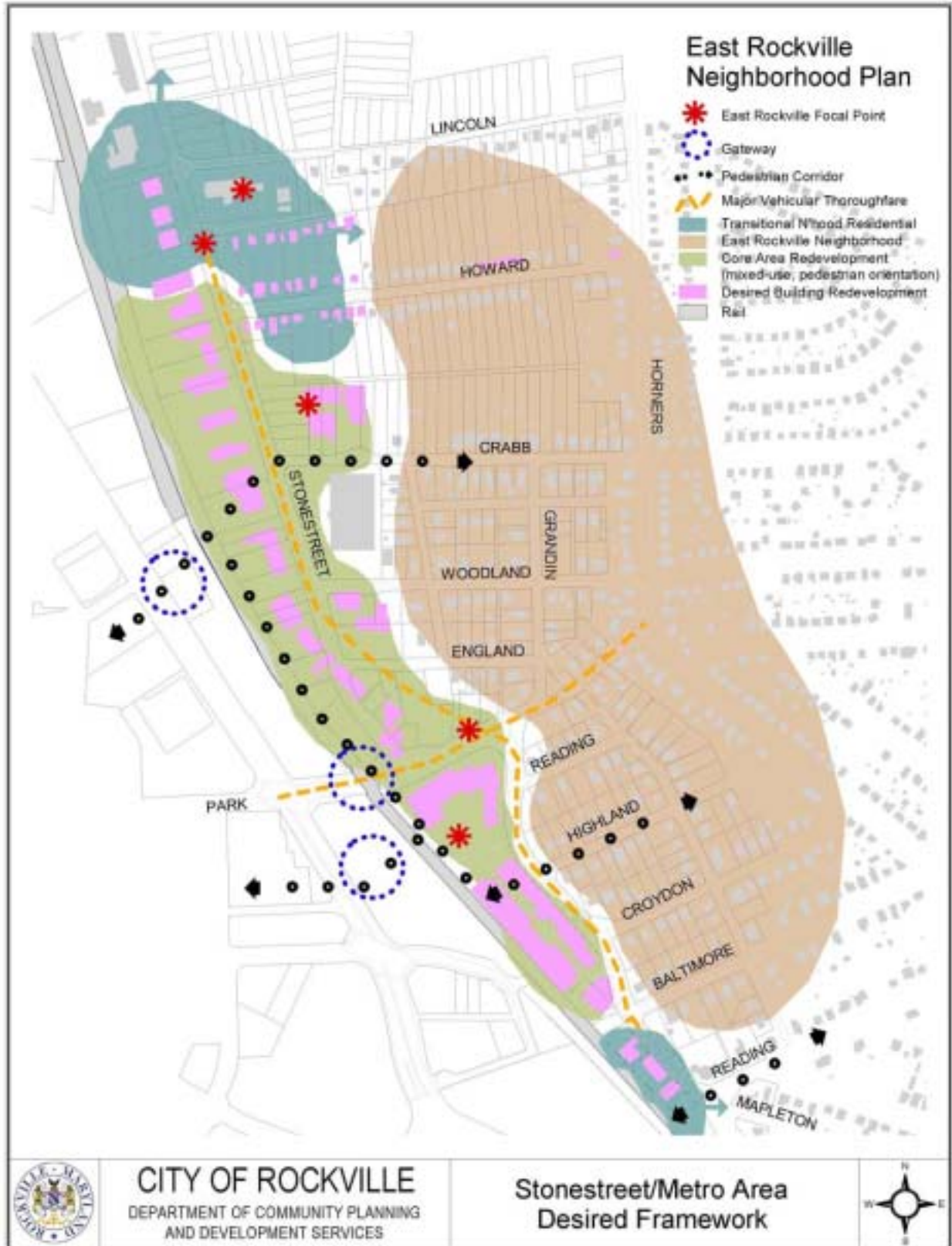


Figure 7. Desired Framework Diagram

## Chapter 2: REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

**GOAL:** To redevelop the Stonestreet Avenue corridor and the Rockville Metro station property with a mix of uses that is both compatible with and complementary to the East Rockville neighborhood, and become an asset for the community.

### Objectives

1. Establish the North Stonestreet Avenue corridor as a vibrant, mixed-use area, with a combination of retail and restaurants, small-scale offices and multifamily residences.
2. Establish the North Stonestreet Avenue Corridor as a Cultural Arts and Entertainment Center for the City, including the future location for a Science Complex.
3. Create a physical environment that replicates a “Main Street” development pattern with a boulevard, wide sidewalks and buildings that front on them.
4. Redevelop the Rockville Metro station site as a transit-oriented, vibrant mix of retail, residential and small-scale office uses with a low-impact skyline.
5. Extend Metro access to both sides of Park Road, and to North Stonestreet Boulevard.
6. Allow existing businesses in the Stonestreet Avenue corridor to continue operating, while encouraging upgrades to existing structures and sites to meet the intent of the Plan.

### Stonestreet Corridor

The North Stonestreet Avenue corridor consists of approximately 25 acres of land that is presently in the City's I-1 (Service Industrial) Zone. The zone has allowed for the development and use of these properties as construction and vehicular storage lots, auto and truck repair and sales and various other service industrial uses. Many of these uses are not compatible with the single-family residential neighborhood in East Rockville that is immediately adjacent. Noise, litter, light and air pollution from the various uses all contribute to the incompatibility. The largest



Figure 8. Montgomery County Public Schools Property

property owner is Montgomery County Public Schools, which owns an 11-acre printing and storage facility in the northern end of the corridor. They are currently in violation of the Zoning Ordinance by parking tractor-trailers in the R-60 Zone. Otherwise, the existing lot pattern consists of many small parcels, although there are several sites that contain larger buildings, such as the NIH printing facility at 301 North Stonestreet Avenue.

### Redevelopment Concept

The redevelopment concept for North Stonestreet Avenue is to transform the corridor into a mixed-use area of neighborhood serving retail, residential and small-scale office uses. As a Cultural Arts and Entertainment District for Rockville, it will become a desired location for cultural institutions such as museums, a Science Complex and educational facilities, as well as art galleries, artist studios and related facilities. This will be accommodated in new buildings to be constructed in the corridor, and potentially by the reuse and renovation of the existing structures. The design and scale of the redevelopment is to be that of a traditional “Main Street” of the early 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century.

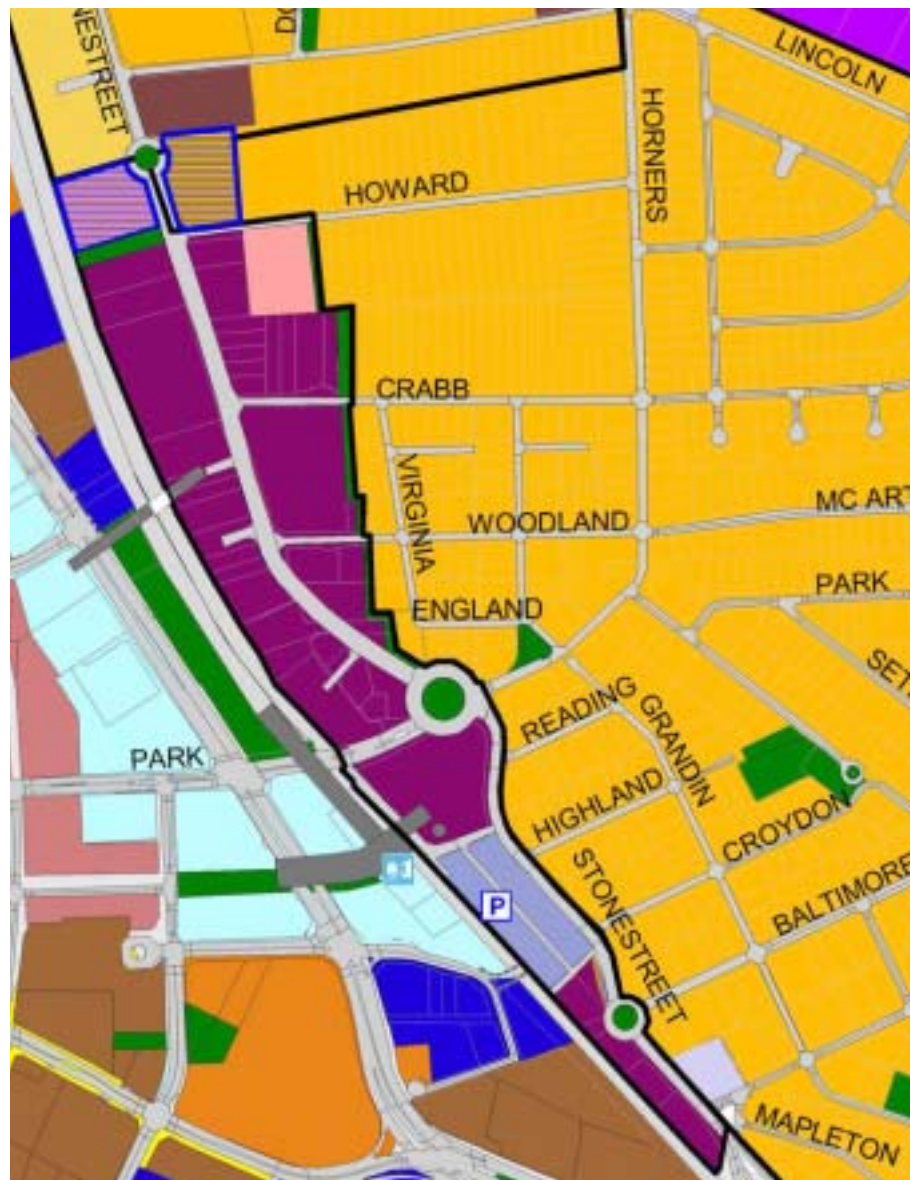


Figure 9. Proposed Land Use Plan for the Stonestreet Corridor and Rockville Metro Station



The corridor is expected to redevelop over time to the mixed-use, Main Street style of development envisioned by this Plan. To facilitate this transition, the zoning for the area must allow a different set of permitted uses than presently exists in the I-1 Zone. This new zone should promote the introduction of retail, office, residential and other uses that are compatible with the residential neighborhood and the vision of the corridor expressed in this Plan. The zoning should also allow for the continued operation of the existing industrial uses, while encouraging aesthetic improvements to those businesses. It is the intent of this Plan that Stonestreet corridor properties redevelop per the Plan's recommendations in response to a combination of market forces, proposed public improvements and private business decisions.



*Figure 10. Artist's View of Redevelopment of North Stonestreet Boulevard (Houston Hancock)*

The desired uses in the new buildings include community-serving retail uses such as dry-cleaners, coffee shops, banks, professional offices and other complementary uses. New buildings should front directly on sidewalks, at heights of two or three stories, as the maximum height limit in the new zone will be 45 feet. Parking lots must be located to the rear of the buildings, and not be visible from the street. The ground floor level should consist of storefronts, small professional offices and arts-related uses. Second story uses include small-scale offices and multifamily units such as lofts. Loft-style residences should be located above the first story of buildings, which could create the potential for live-work units in the area, in conjunction with certain retail, personal services or other uses. Live-work units are especially suited for artist housing and in

mixed-use areas like what is envisioned in the corridor. In addition, an appropriate anchor for the corridor could be a Rockville Science Complex, which would consist of a biotechnology museum, historical display and educational meeting space, and function as a destination point for the area.

North Stonestreet Avenue should be transformed into a boulevard, with a planted median, wide sidewalks with decorative paving patterns, street trees and planting areas, period street lighting, pedestrian zones for outdoor seating and other street amenities. There should be one travelway in each direction, with on-street parking provided on both sides of the street.

Because of the existing I-1 zoning, the Stonestreet corridor is currently home to many service industrial businesses that serve the community. It is the intent of this Plan that these existing businesses not be displaced by zoning changes. The preferred approach is for existing legal I-1 uses and structures be granted grandfathered status, with incentives to achieve an enhanced grandfathered status by making property improvements in keeping with the Master Plan objectives. The physical appearance and operation of businesses that wish to continue operations in the corridor should be upgraded in order to assist in the desired change of character. A combination of consistent code enforcement and education, economic incentives and zoning changes should be developed and implemented to further this goal. The implementation strategy, as well as the exact zoning mechanism, to accomplish the desired change in character will be developed after the adoption of the Neighborhood Plan. This will be done with the participation of the residential and business community in the East Rockville area.

## **Design Guidelines**

North Stonestreet Avenue should be transformed into a boulevard, with a minimum 8 to 10 feet wide planted median, wide sidewalks with decorative paving patterns, street trees and planting areas, period street lighting, pedestrian zones for outdoor seating and other street amenities. Buildings fronting the Stonestreet/Park traffic circle should provide a generous setback to allow for a landscape strip, outdoor eating areas and wide sidewalks. There should be one travelway in each direction, with on-street parking provided on both sides of the street.

The design of the new structures should reflect a traditional main street design, with two and three story structures containing retail on the ground floor and office and residential above. Appropriate architectural styles should be strongly reminiscent of vintage designs of early Rockville, such as the Vinson's Drug Store Building, the Montgomery County Bank Building and other historic facades from the City's past. Adequate setbacks for buildings should be employed to allow wide sidewalks, plantings and trees as mentioned above. Traditional storefront design is appropriate along the ground floor.

## Recommendations

- ⌘ Realign and reconfigure North and South Stonestreet Avenues to form a pedestrian-friendly traffic circle at their intersection with Park Road as part of the conversion to a boulevard. The final alignment of North and South Stonestreet Avenues, as well as the ultimate location of the traffic circle, will be determined by an alignment study as well as final design and engineering.
  - š Landscape the circle to beautify the neighborhood and create an entrance feature for the East Rockville neighborhood. The circle's median may include artwork such as a statue of Dr. Stonestreet and a possible water feature, as well as sidewalks and attractive landscaping.
  - š A small retaining wall will be necessary to stabilize the backyards of two homes on Virginia Avenue in the area where the circle cuts into the embankment near Park Road.
- ⌘ Rename North and South Stonestreet Avenues to North and South Stonestreet Boulevard.
- ⌘ Redevelop the North Stonestreet Boulevard properties as a low-density, mixed-use area, with the preferred development pattern being ground floor retail space with office or residential above.
- ⌘ Realign and reconfigure North and South Stonestreet Avenues to form a pedestrian-friendly traffic circle at their intersection with Park Road as part of the conversion to a boulevard. The final alignment of North and South Stonestreet Avenues, as well as the ultimate location of the traffic circle, will be determined by final design and engineering.
  - š Landscape the circle to beautify the neighborhood and create an entrance feature for the East Rockville neighborhood. The circle's median may include artwork such as a statue of Dr. Stonestreet and a possible water feature, as well as sidewalks and attractive landscaping.
  - š Provide building setbacks that allow a landscaped area and pedestrian zone at the circle.
- ⌘ Develop a new zoning district, modeled on the TC-1 Zone but known as the Town Center East (TCE) Zone, that allows for the variety of uses and appropriate development standards envisioned for the Stonestreet corridor.
- ⌘ Rezone North Stonestreet Boulevard properties generally south of Howard Avenue from the I-1 (Service Industrial) Zone to the new TCE (Town Center Mixed Use) Zone, and properties at the southeast corner of Howard Avenue and North Stonestreet Boulevard to the R-60 Zone (see also preliminary zoning map and Chapter 6, Implementation). Rezoning, via a Sectional Map Amendment,



would only take place after completion and adoption of the Implementation Strategy study.

- €# Develop zoning provisions, including grandfathering, that allow existing legal uses in the Stonestreet corridor to continue operating, subject to applicable regulations, such as the Zoning Ordinance and Property Maintenance Code (Chapter 5, Article XII of the City Code). It is expected that certain uses may attain enhanced grandfather status in return for compliance with defined parameters that enable existing uses to become compatible with the vision set forth in this Plan.
- €# Design buildings to reflect the historical development of Rockville. Within the TCE zoning, three-level buildings would have merchants on the first floor, businesses on the second floor, and residential lofts on the third floor, or some variation thereof.
- €# Buffer the homes adjacent and along the east side of the commercial section of Stonestreet Boulevard, with landscaped transition areas of grass, trees, shrubs and fencing in order to insulate these homes from noise and activity. These transition areas should be provided on the nonresidential properties.
- €# Rezone North Stonestreet Boulevard properties generally south of Howard Avenue from the I-1 (Service Industrial) Zone to the new TC-1 (Town Center Mixed Use) Zone (see proposed zoning map).
- €# Encourage the following retail and personal service uses to locate in the corridor: banks, cleaners, restaurants, craft/arts shops, medical and professional offices, law offices, galleries, antique shops, artist studios, used book stores, and delicatessens.
- €# Rezone property on west side of South Stonestreet Boulevard between the Metro station property and the New Street pedestrian bridge to the TC-2 Zone.
- €# Provide a free or low cost trolley or Ride On shuttle service around the circle and along the new North Stonestreet Boulevard and across Rockville Pike (MD 355) to connect Town Center East with the core of Town Center. The transportation service will bring people from North Stonestreet Boulevard and Lincoln Park to the Metro station, across Route 355 to Town Center, the new Rockville Regional Library, and back to Stonestreet Avenue.
- €# Create parks along the Boulevard, a possible sculpture garden and train garden.

- Widen North Stonestreet Avenue to a double lane boulevard (one lane in each direction) with an 8 to 10 feet median of grass, flowers, shrubs, period lighting, and trees. Traffic flow into and out of parking lots should be designed not to increase traffic on residential streets, such as Woodland Road and Crabb Avenue.

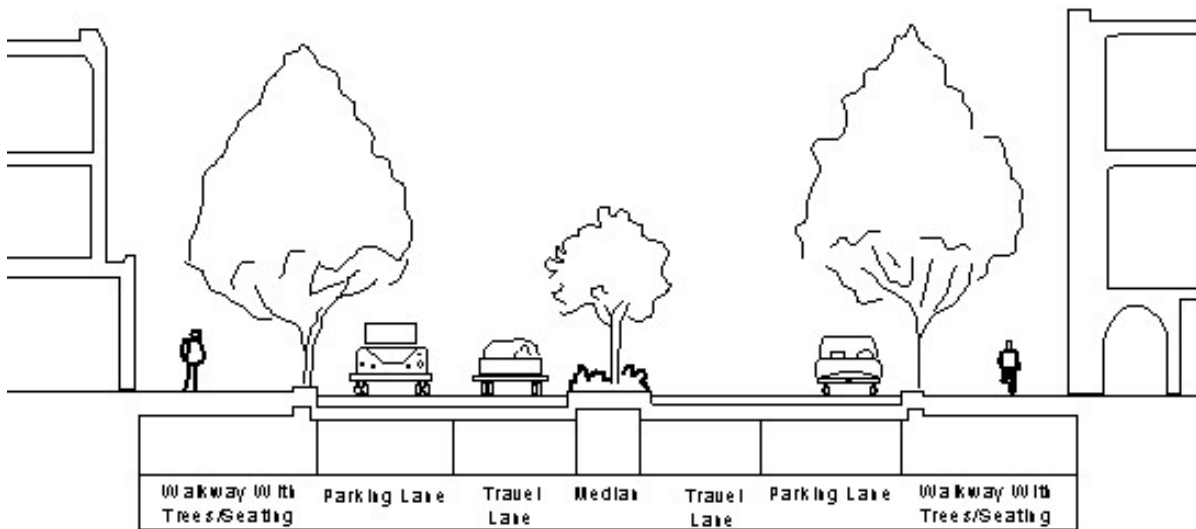


Figure 11. Stonestreet Boulevard cross section

- Locate additional parking behind businesses against the railroad with exits on Stonestreet Boulevard at Crabb, Howard, and Lincoln Avenues.
- Relocate utilities underground, and/or along the railroad tracks if above ground.
- Design buildings to reflect the historical development of Rockville. Within the TC-1 zoning, three-level buildings would have merchants on the first floor, businesses on the second floor, and residential lofts on the third floor, or some variation thereof.
- Construct a pedestrian-friendly circle at the north end of North Stonestreet Boulevard between Howard and Lincoln Avenues to permit trolley or shuttle transportation and traffic turn-around, as well as northern access to North Stonestreet Boulevard and into Lincoln Park. All area north from the circle should be zoned R-60, single family detached homes. The circle will calm the impact of traffic on Lincoln Park and provide for turn around traffic visiting the commercial area of North Stonestreet Boulevard.
- Promote the North Stonestreet Avenue area as a “cultural arts” center for Rockville with strong emphasis on luring craftsmen, artisans, and those involved in other creative endeavors to enhance this part of the city as an Arts and Entertainment Center.

- § Encourage the provision of live-work units within the Stonestreet corridor. Units with ground floor retail or personal services uses with residential units above are preferred, as are loft units where artists could live and work within the same units.
- €# Develop a Science Complex including a science museum, a science center, and science meeting center. The preferred location for the Science Complex is on the Montgomery County Public Schools property on either the east or west side of Stonestreet Boulevard, between the proposed traffic circle and Howard Avenue.
- €# Develop property north of the mixed-use area with single-family homes in keeping with the rest of the adjacent neighborhoods of East Rockville and Lincoln Park. The preferred style and scale is in craftsman-style dwellings. Homes in these areas are eclectic in design and construction, and new construction should compliment the character of this area.
- €# Construct a pedestrian/bicycle crossover of the Metro/CSX tracks and Route 355 above or below grade between Crabb Avenue and Woodland Road for resident community access to Rockville Town Center, shopping, and the library. It must also span Route 355 to provide for pedestrian safety.
- €# Extend the Metro Station platform north to cross Park Road with an additional entrance/exit to Metro.
- €# Construct an underpass for pedestrians and bicyclists to Stonestreet Boulevard north of Park Road at the descent of the extended Metro platform.
- €# Buffer the homes adjacent and along the east side of the commercial section of Stonestreet Boulevard, with landscaped transition areas of grass, trees, shrubs and fencing in order to insulate these homes from noise and activity. These transition areas should be provided on the nonresidential properties.
- €# Add an entrance/exit to the Metro parking lot to Church Street and a directed exit to South Stonestreet Boulevard at Baltimore Road. Better flow of Metro parkers coming and going on the South Stonestreet Boulevard ramps can be achieved by directing their movement into and out of the parking area encouraging them to use the Veirs Mill Road ramps and thereby eliminating this traffic from the neighborhood.
- €# Strongly support the creation of private art in public places and in private development with easement programs, and encourage the use of trees, shrubs, and rooftop gardens with City-sponsored landscape easement programs.
- €# Employ unique street sign hardware and lighting fixtures for the redevelopment area, in order to help create a signature identity for East Rockville, while

minimizing the negative impact increased artificial lighting may cause to adjacent homes.

### Rockville Metro Station Property

The Rockville Metro station property consists of approximately seven acres bounded by Park Road on the north, South Stonestreet Avenue on the east, privately owned service industrial property on the south, and the Metro/CSX tracks on the west. The property currently contains surface parking lots serving the Metro station, and a bus loop with drop-off and pick-up bays. Because the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) owns the property, it is a strong candidate for a joint development proposal. The intent of these recommendations is to clearly state the desired land uses



Figure 12. Rockville Metro station

and development parameters in anticipation of future development on the station property. It should be noted that these recommendations are intended to complement but not supersede the recommendations of the *Town Center Master Plan* for the western portion of the Rockville Metro station property, also owned by WMATA and likely to be part of the joint development proposal.

### Redevelopment Concept

The east side of the Rockville Metro station property should be redeveloped into a mixed-use area containing retail, office and residential uses. The density and scale of this new development is intended to complement the neighborhood as well as take advantage of its location at a transit stop. The buildings at the northern end of the station property should be oriented toward the streets and the Metro, MARC and Amtrak stations. Clear pedestrian paths should connect the station entrances, the pedestrian promenade originating in the Town Center and crossing MD 355, and the pedestrian pathways, extended platform and plaza on the east side of the station. The promenade should terminate in a prominent architectural feature that incorporates a stair and elevator tower, and connect across Park Road to the Stonestreet redevelopment area. A feature such as a clock tower can be a landmarking element.



*Figure 13. Illustrative of Metro station redevelopment and vicinity*

Pedestrian traffic entering and exiting the station area would do so through a plaza that includes landscaping, street furniture such as benches and tables, and public art. The building surrounding the plaza should contain ground floor retail and/or small-scale office uses that serve neighborhood residents and commuters. The upper stories may be multifamily residential units or small-scale offices. Along the public street frontages, there should also be ground-floor retail with

wide sidewalks to enhance pedestrian flow.

The southern portion of the Metro property along Stonestreet Boulevard should consist of single-family attached (townhouse) units. The design, materials and scale of these units should be compatible with the single-family homes across South Stonestreet Boulevard. The remaining portion of the site between the townhomes and the railroad tracks would contain structured parking to replace the station surface parking lots that currently exist on the site. Through careful site design and the placement of the residential units, the parking garage should not be visible from the residences in the East Rockville neighborhood.

## Design Guidelines

The new construction on the Metro station site should also be rooted in the architecture of Rockville's past of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, prior to urban renewal. Design cues should be taken from vintage railroad-oriented architecture, particularly the design of the former Rockville railroad station on the west side of the Metro/CSX tracks.

Materials such as brick and stone with wood trim are appropriate. Maximum height limits on the property shall be governed by a residential proximity slope to allow for the tallest buildings near the railroad tracks and buildings in scale with the nearby homes along South Stonestreet Avenue.





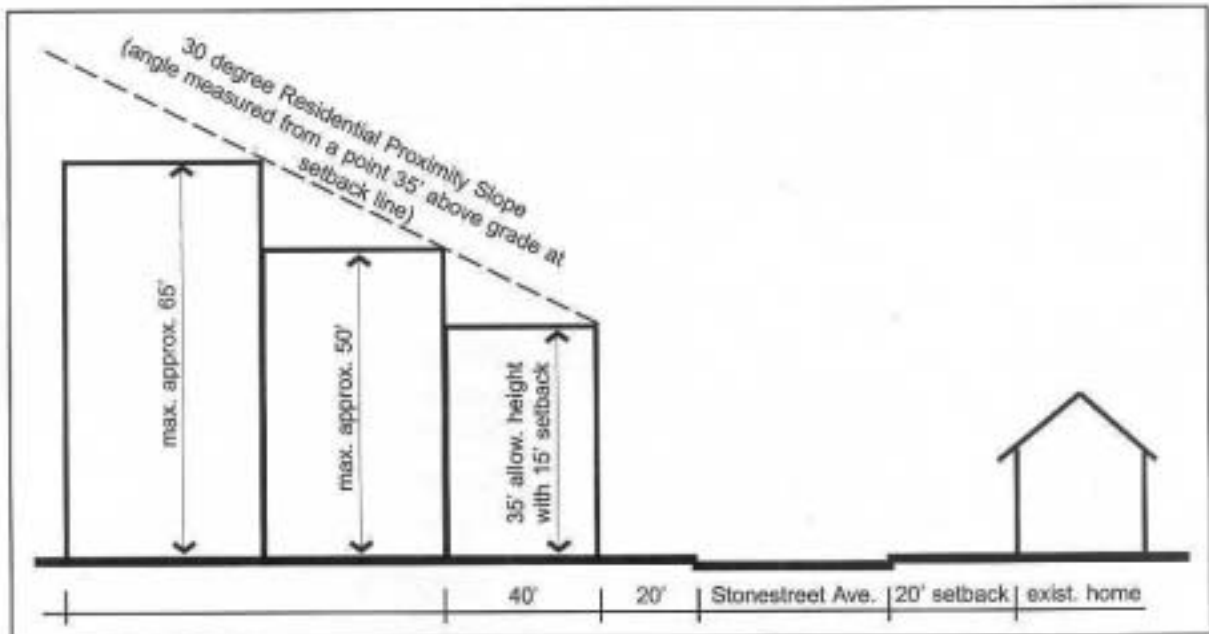
*Figure 14. Artist's view of the Rockville Metro redevelopment, looking west on Park Road (Houston Hancock)*

## Recommendations

- ⌘ Develop the Metro station site as a vibrant mix of residential, retail and office uses with merchants serving both commuters and residents from ground floor retail spaces.
- ⌘ Use only high quality environmentally-friendly architectural design, materials and construction for the new development. Materials that evoke a permanent and historic feel, such as brick and stone are encouraged.
- ⌘ Develop the southern portion of the station property along South Stonestreet Avenue as townhouse residential units, with architecture that harmonizes with the station design as well as the neighborhood.
- ⌘ Rezone the eastern portion of the Metro station site to the new TC-2 Zone. However, the maximum height limits shall be per the Rockville Town Center Master Plan diagram that illustrates a 30-degree residential proximity slope.



- ⌘ Preserve a ground level pedestrian zone of 20 feet measured from the existing South Stonestreet Avenue curb line, as well as a maximum height of 65 feet. No height exemptions or bonuses should be permitted.



A residential proximity slope should be utilized at the Metro station to protect adjacent residences.

Figure 15. Residential proximity slope

- ⌘ Design the new Metro station as a destination in its own right, with unique architecture reflecting the history of Rockville and that functions as a focal point of Metro site redevelopment.
  - § Develop properties with unique exterior design that distinguishes the Rockville station from other Metro stations.
  - § Provide a user- and family-friendly environment.
  - § Use air rights over the station to include an interior retail promenade.
  - § Improve the appearance of the railroad bridge over Park Road by cladding the existing structure in new architectural finishes, consistent with its role as the gateway to East Rockville.
  - § Require that parking be sited towards the railroad side of the property, not be visible from public streets and prohibit any increase in the number of commuter parking spaces.
  - § Move some parking and all bus traffic to the west side of the tracks to offset the increase in traffic on the east side brought on by new residential units and retail establishments.
  - § Recommend acquisition of property at the south end of Metro property for more efficient parking garage access from South Stonestreet Boulevard at Baltimore Road and to encourage traffic exit towards Veirs Mill Road. This

property would be zoned TC-2 with the residential proximity slope, as a continuation of the recommended Metro site zoning.

- ## Create an open and public promenade that links East Rockville to Town Center with connections to the proposed redevelopment of North Stonestreet Avenue.
  - š Recommend a lively pedestrian “street” over the railroad tracks, and Rockville Pike, lined with shops and cafes that would serve commuters, residents and visitors; open for pedestrian, bike, and canine use.
  - š Create a Grand Plaza pedestrian connection to Town Center to replace the current “pedestrian chute”.
  - š The promenade over MD 355 should include daylight and appropriate night lighting.
  - š The promenade should serve the general public as well as provide a safe connection to transit.
- ## Extend Metro platform over Park Road to facilitate pedestrian crossing to North Stonestreet redevelopment
- ## Enhance and preserve the positive relationship between the Metro site and the adjoining neighborhood.
  - š Present a handsome streetscape along South Stonestreet distinguished by generous setbacks, quality landscaping and hardscaping.
  - š The shops lining the proposed traffic circle at the intersection of Stonestreet Boulevard and Park Road will create a new public courtyard space within Metro site.
  - š Maintain 20 feet of sidewalk/green space between South Stonestreet Boulevard and the new residences on the Metro site.
  - š Maintain mature trees lining South Stonestreet Boulevard for the East Rockville neighborhood.
- ## Minimize the impact of Metro traffic on existing traffic patterns.
  - š Convert South Stonestreet Boulevard to a two-lane boulevard with landscaped median if feasible.
  - š Maintain the current vehicular entrance to the Metro site at Highland Avenue.
  - š Create new, reduced Kiss And Ride directly adjacent to Metro station with one-way exit to Park Road.
  - š Create a tunnel from Church Street, under the Metro tracks, to provide primary parking garage access to limit traffic impact. Use of this tunnel will be for garage access only and cut-through traffic will be prohibited.

### **Chapter 3: NEIGHBORHOOD LAND USE**

**GOAL: To retain East Rockville as a stable and secure residential community.**

#### **Objectives**

1. Maintain the single-family residential character of the community at the density allowed by existing zoning.
2. Establish East Rockville as a Neighborhood Conservation Area to reflect community values of retaining and enhancing the physical and natural environment of the community.
3. Prohibit Special Development Procedures, such as Planned Residential Units (PRU) and Residential Townhouse developments (RTH) from being constructed within the residential neighborhood area.
4. Ensure that institutional, commercial and industrial uses within and adjacent to the community do not impact on the residential quality of life in the neighborhood.

#### **Neighborhood Concept**

The East Rockville neighborhood has been a stable and secure community for many years, and it is the intent of the Neighborhood Plan that it remains so. Members of the community have expressed a strong connection and identification with the community, in some cases for generations. It is the intent of this Plan to help maintain this for future generations.

With few exceptions, the predominant land use within the community has been single-family homes. Because of the origins of the community in the 1890s, and with home construction occurring primarily in the 1940s and 1950s but continuing through the 1990s, the community has acquired a diversity of home styles and sizes that is unique to Rockville. In many ways this has contributed to the “home-town” feel of the community that is felt by longtime and newly arrived residents. In addition, the majority of homes in the neighborhood are owner-occupied, also contributing to the connection and affection that many residents feel for the community.

Geographically, the neighborhood has well-defined borders. These include MD 28 (First Street/Norbeck Road) on the east and south (Veirs Mill Road), the Metro/railroad tracks on the west and Lincoln Park and the Southlawn industrial area on the north. However, the challenge for the future will be the retention of the neighborhood as a community with a high quality of life, as there will be development pressures as redevelopment occurs on the Metro station property and in the Stonestreet Avenue corridor. This Plan aims to recommend redevelopment in those areas that is compatible

and enhances the neighborhood. Within the neighborhood, the predominant single-family residential character will be retained, through the retention of existing zoning and designation of a Neighborhood Conservation Area for the community. The Conservation Area will set forth the vision and define the special characteristics that make East Rockville a special community.

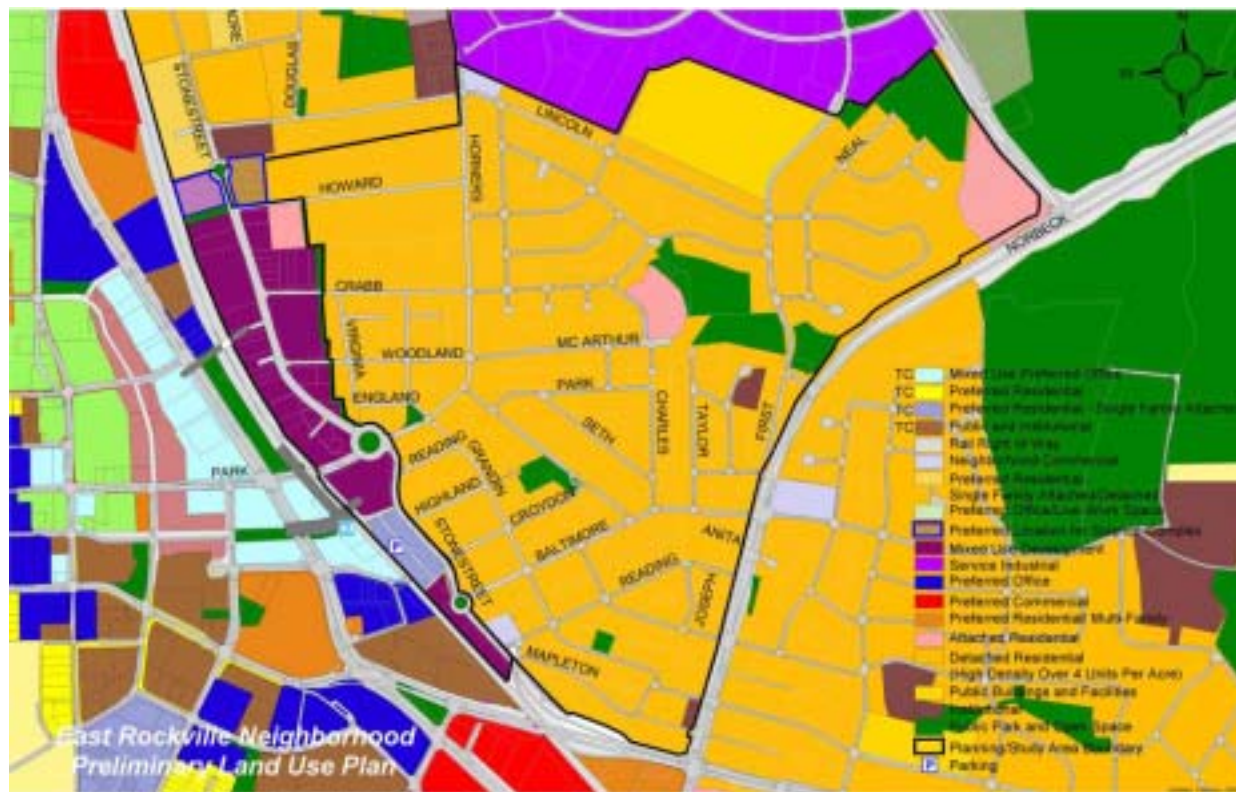


Figure 16. Proposed Land Use Map

## Residential Conservation Area

Most of the neighborhood is zoned R-60 and R-75, which are single-family detached residential zones. The Plan recommends explicitly that the single-family character of the East Rockville neighborhood must be retained, and therefore does not recommend any changes to either zone or additional overlay zoning of any kind within the single-family area.

New residences within the neighborhood are expected to be limited to those that can be built on existing lots, or on lots that can be subdivided in a manner that fits with the neighborhood lot pattern. Incompatible resubdivisions can impair neighborhood character, especially when new homes can be built on lots that do not have traditional

frontage on a public street. These types of lots are known as pipestem lots, and often make a neighborhood appear overcrowded. The City Zoning Ordinance allows pipestem lots, provided that minimum requirements are met, such as a minimum width of the pipe stem of 20 feet. In East Rockville, because of the R-60 Zone, some of the older long and narrow lots may be susceptible to resubdivision in this manner, depending on the amount of lot frontage available. However, pipestem lots are not recommended at this time.

In addition, the Neighborhood Conservation Area (NCA) identifies general characteristics that residents would like to



*Figure 18. Baltimore Road looking east toward Grandin Avenue*

see preserved and retained as the neighborhood moves into the future. While the NCA will offer no



*Figure 17. Example of pipestem lot*

additional requirements, it is anticipated that residents and builders will look to this Plan for guidance before designing new construction in anticipation of enhancing the community. It reflects the concerns of residents trying to envision how patterns of design and development characterized by a diversity of architectural styles can be conserved in order to maintain and enhance neighborhood character. Rather than achieve these ends

through regulatory measures, this chapter focuses on educating residents about choices available for sustaining features that contribute to neighborhood identity.

Single-family detached housing has always been a predominate feature of East Rockville. With multiple subdivisions evolving over time, the diversity of housing styles throughout the neighborhood has led to a distinct sense of place. Today, East Rockville is known for its unique pattern of residential architecture and street layout. Conservation of dominant features define and create a certain character for East Rockville preserves this legacy.

All redevelopment and new residences in East Rockville must conform to existing



*Figure 19. The neighborhood includes a small number of single-family attached units at Redgate Farms and Charles Walk (shown here)*



City standards for lot coverage, setbacks and height limits. It is anticipated that the historical survey to be undertaken in the neighborhood (See Appendix 3) will identify the unique architectural characteristics and residential construction features that are found in East Rockville. Many of the features, such as front porches, dormers and detached garages, are elements that can be added to existing dwellings or new homes so that they relate to the existing residences while adding new architectural diversity to the community.

## Historic Preservation

Another important method that can help protect East Rockville's physical and cultural heritage and encourage retention of community character is through historic preservation principles and tools. East Rockville has a rich and varied history, and its physical environment is a clear reminder. Within the neighborhood planning area, 66 percent of the homes were built before 1955, so many of the homes are within the 50-year window when structures begin to be evaluated for historic significance.



*Figure 20. Croydon Park pumphouse*

The Croydon Park pumphouse is a historic resource in the community that merits preservation. This structure, now a community center, was built in 1897 as part of Rockville's first public water system. Since being decommissioned in 1957, the building has been a community and senior citizens center for the neighborhood. Given its prominent part in Rockville's development and its years of service to the East Rockville neighborhood, the structure should be considered for historic designation.

Individuals in East Rockville pursue historic preservation through designation (See Appendix 3). However, the Plan does not recommend creation of a historic or conservation district for East Rockville as an implementation strategy for neighborhood preservation. Although many residents recognize and value the special character of the community, not all property owners are interested in historic district designation. The Plan therefore supports the individual efforts of owners to pursue historic designation for their own properties. The City of Rockville will be undertaking a



*Figure 21. Kingdon House, 300 Reading Avenue*



survey of East Rockville in order to compile eligibility information on properties and structures, as part of a larger effort for the entire City. As property owners become aware of certain financial benefits of historic designation, an accumulation of individually-designated properties may come to approximate an historic district in some locations.

### **Neighborhood Commercial Uses**

The Planning Area contains three properties that provide local commercial retail. Two of these properties are located in the C-1 (Local Commercial) Zone: the property at the corner of South Stonestreet Avenue and Reading Avenue that contains a store and carry-out, and the Maryvale Center, which contains a convenience store, barber shop and carry-out restaurants. There have been many strong complaints about alcohol sales for off-premise consumption, loitering and other issues relating to these operations. While this activity is unacceptable, the plan encourages a limited amount of commercial development to provide convenience retail services for the community. The Plan further recommends that the existing zoned commercial areas not be allowed to expand their land area and that the properties be in compliance with the property maintenance code to minimize conflicts with the surrounding residential community. It is anticipated that the Maryvale Center should be rezoned to the R-60 Zone so that the property may be redeveloped to be compatible with the adjacent residential community.

The Planning Area contains three properties that provide local commercial retail. Two of these properties are located in the C-1 (Local Commercial) Zone: the property at the corner of South Stonestreet Avenue and Reading Avenue that contains a convenience store and carry-out, and the Maryvale Center, which contains a convenience store, and carry-out restaurants. There have been many strong complaints about alcohol sales for off-premise consumption, loitering and other issues relating to these operations. While this activity is unacceptable, the plan encourages a limited amount of commercial development to provide convenience retail services for the community. The Plan further recommends that the existing zoned commercial areas not be allowed to expand their land area and that the properties be in compliance with the property maintenance code, as well as regulations on the sale of alcoholic beverages, in order to minimize conflicts with the surrounding residential community. Because the sale of alcoholic beverages for off-premise consumption is not a permitted use in the C-1 Zone, this activity should be eliminated through available means.

The third commercial retail operation is the Maryvale Market, located at the northwest corner of Howard Avenue and North Horners Lane, which is a nonconforming retail use in the R-60 Zone. The Plan does not recommend a change to C-1 zoning for the Maryvale Market, but that it continue as a nonconforming use that will eventually be eliminated. The commercial use should cease operations eventually in order to eliminate the conflicts with the residential neighborhood that is caused by this use. In the interim, the sale of alcoholic beverages should be eliminated from the site.



Figure 22. View of Maryvale Center

The third commercial retail operation is the Maryvale Market, located at the corner of Howard Avenue and North Horners Lane, which is a nonconforming use in the R-60 Zone. The Plan does not recommend a change to C-1 zoning for the Maryvale Market, and recommends that the commercial use cease operations immediately in order to eliminate the conflicts with the residential neighborhood that is caused by this use.

## Institutional Uses

The Planning Area contains several institutional uses within and adjacent to the residential area:

- ✖ The Lawrence Court drug rehabilitation facility operated by Montgomery County government at 1 Lawrence Court
- ✖ Rockville Free Methodist Church on First Street
- ✖ Maryvale Elementary School, 1000 First Street
- ✖ Dorothy Day Women's Shelter, on North Stonestreet Avenue
- ✖ Mt. Calvary Baptist Church on North Horners Lane in Lincoln Park



Figure 23. 1 Lawrence Court

To date, neither Lawrence Court nor the Free Methodist Church facilities has been disruptive to the residential community that surrounds them. However, any expansion or change in use or operation of these facilities should not impact the residential quality of life in East Rockville. In the event that the institutional uses cease operation, the preferred option is for these properties to be redeveloped as single-family homes per the underlying R-60 Zone. Alternatively, these properties may be used by institutional uses with similar or lesser impacts on the community.

Another institutional use in the community is Maryvale Elementary School on First Street, owned and operated by Montgomery County Public Schools. This institution is an important asset to the community, and the Plan recommends that it continue as such. The Plan also recommends that the school grounds be converted to an active park and recreation facilities operated by the City, which should enhance its role as a focal point of the neighborhood.

Some institutional uses technically not within the planning area boundaries are of concern for neighborhood residents. For example, the recent expansion plans of the Mt. Calvary Baptist Church on North Horners Lane have caused considerable

controversy in both the East Rockville and Lincoln Park neighborhoods. The church's initial proposal for expansion involved the purchasing of nearby homes in the community to obtain additional land for church-supporting purposes such as off-street parking. Many of these lots were not contiguous with the church and were surrounded by residential properties. This expansion plan was clearly not in character with the neighborhood, and the community strongly voiced this concern.

This recent scenario illustrates the potential for conflict with institutional uses that are located within residential neighborhoods. Although the term "institutional uses" is a rather broad land use category, and many are an integral part of the fabric of a community. Others negatively impact neighborhoods by virtue of their operations or physical expansion. The East Rockville neighborhood is very sensitive to these concerns, and for that reason the Plan



*Figure 24. View of Mt. Calvary Baptist Church*

recommends that no new institutional uses be located within the residential areas of East Rockville. In addition, the impacts of any expansions or change in operations of institutional uses must be closely evaluated by the neighborhood and the City of Rockville for quality of life concerns. The Plan therefore supports the adoption of reasonable limitations on the expansion of institutional uses that are located within residential neighborhoods, through text amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance.

The adjacent public institutional use owned by the Montgomery County Board of Education is recommended to be redeveloped with a mix of residential units that will be more compatible with the community. In addition, institutional uses such as homeless shelters and others that are in or adjacent to the neighborhood should be closely monitored to ensure that their operation does not contribute to problems within the community.

### **Property Maintenance and Code Enforcement**

Most residences in the East Rockville neighborhood are well maintained. However, as the housing stock in the neighborhood continues to age, residential property maintenance will continue to be a concern in the future for a small percentage of properties. The Plan therefore supports the property maintenance code and its enforcement in East Rockville. However, the process should be more user-friendly than currently perceived by neighborhood residents. It is essential that residents are educated about their responsibilities under the Property Maintenance Code. This would ideally provide a knowledge base for area residents to ensure a clear and proper understanding of property owner responsibilities. This information should be provided

so that it is understandable to a broad range of residents, including those who may be impaired or may primarily speak a language other than English.

## **Buffers and Transitions**

Although the neighborhood is well-defined by boundaries, these do not always provide appropriate transition areas between residential and nonresidential uses and other features such as highways. An opportunity exists with this Plan to provide buffers and transition areas to reinforce the residential quality of life in the community. The introduction of green space can be used not only to limit sight and sound of nearby buildings and uses, but also can contribute to the social and environmental health of the neighborhood. The Mayor and Council have enacted development standards that apply when nonresidential properties and residential properties abut. The new setback and building height standards will limit the height of new construction on nonresidential properties in the neighborhood that abut residential properties, such as along Lincoln Street east of North Horners Lane, and the residential properties adjacent to nonresidential properties on North Stonestreet Avenue. New buffer standards and landscape screening requirements should be added into the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that these buffers are achieved in the redevelopment occurring in the Stonestreet corridor.

Existing landscaping and buffers along roadways such as MD 28 and Veirs Mill Road should be retained and enhanced, especially with upcoming projects such as the hike and bike Millennium Trail along MD 28. In these areas, a requirement for the provision of landscape screening is offered as a possible transitioning tool. This will not only soften the edges between residential and nonresidential land uses, but also functionally satisfies a need to create barriers that reduce the resulting noise and visual impacts.

While much of the Plan's emphasis is on the community's perimeter and the edge area of the Stonestreet Corridor, it also recognizes the need to address the conditions of other surrounding areas that impact the residential character of East Rockville. New buffers may be necessary to address the condition for industrial properties that are not likely to change in the near future, to ensure some amount of screening between the incompatible uses. While the City cannot compel buffers to be provided on existing properties where none have been required, it may be possible to develop a program with incentives to allow buffers to be installed within an easement area on the industrial property. Pursuit of this option is recommended as an implementation strategy.

In the longer term, the arrangement and order of permitted uses, services, and activities both in and around East Rockville have been identified as essential to promoting a cohesive mixture of development that balances the need to promote and preserve a suitable residential environment with the organization of adjacent commercial, retail, and industrial districts. As a result, a portion of the Southlawn industrial area that abuts the neighborhood should be examined for possible land use and transportation patterns

that would be encouraged in order to create a more appropriate transition between industrial and residential areas.

Currently zoned I-1 (Service Industrial), the area has been developed as a location for industrial uses such as general warehousing, auto repair and ancillary retail facilities for commodities appropriate to the zone can be found throughout this area. Over the years, development has made this area an industrial employment center in Montgomery County, yet this has come at a price to residents of the adjacent East Rockville



*Figure 25. Aerial view of Southlawn study area*

neighborhood. Truck and other heavy vehicular traffic associated with industrial services use neighborhood streets creating routine nonresidential traffic patterns. Industrial property has also been allowed to exist adjacent to residential areas. This is particularly evident in the area of single-family homes along Lincoln Street that have industrial zoned lots abutting rear properties.

The neighborhood plan therefore recommends further study of the potential redevelopment of the portion of the Southlawn industrial area impacting the neighborhood, in order to achieve more a compatible land use pattern. One favorable option could be the diluting of industrial

services by encouraging residential, retail, and office uses within this area in order to create a more mixed-use area that expands residential services and activities while still retaining elements of its current industrial use. These might include various types of dwelling units that combine space for work and space for living in both individual and group settings. Examples include service industrial uses with residential lofts as well as both attached and detached dwelling units. The retailing of convenience goods as well as those produced from artisan and craftsman trades would compliment such rearrangements. Small-scale office space could be incorporated into the layout of any number of uses. Recreational facilities along with public space could further enhance the area's relationship with neighboring residential areas. Industrial uses geared toward automotive repair as well as manufacturing and processing might be eliminated in favor of those seen as more compatible with new residential conditions. A transportation network would have to serve the purpose of creating both internal and external circulation patterns in order to support these uses while filtering existing nonresidential traffic away from East Rockville streets, especially North Horners Lane and First Street. Regardless of what the exact details will be, the idea that compatibility between East Rockville and the neighboring Southlawn area can be further enhanced through the redistribution of land uses and transportation system makes the compelling argument for a detailed study of this area.

## **Recommendations**

- €# Retain the R-60 and R-75 Zones for residential property in the Planning Area, with no overlay zoning.
- €# Ensure resubdivisions are compatible with the existing lot pattern in the neighborhood. Discourage pipestem lots.
- €# Rely on existing zoning laws to provide sufficient regulation, through development standards such as setback requirements and height limitation, for new construction.
- €# Prohibit Special Development Procedures, such as Planned Residential Units (PRU) and Residential Townhouse (RTH) development from being constructed within the residential neighborhood.
- €# Develop and implement an educational component about property maintenance code enforcement procedures to ensure that neighborhood residents are knowledgeable about their homeowner responsibilities.
- €# Strictly enforce the property maintenance code and other applicable laws such as public health and sale of alcoholic beverage regulations, for the commercial properties located within the neighborhood.
- €# Eliminate the sale of alcoholic beverages from the three commercial retail operations (Maryvale Center, Maryvale Market and Stonestreet Convenience Mart) within the residential neighborhood.
- €# Ensure that institutional uses are good neighbors to the East Rockville community. Any proposed expansion or change in use should be considered only if minimal or no reduction on neighborhood quality of life can be ensured.
- €# Reuse institutional properties with single-family residential dwellings per the underlying zoning. In lieu of this, structures may only be occupied by uses with similar or reduced impacts.
- €# Identify, through historical survey, those architectural elements that contribute to neighborhood character, such as front porches, dormers and detached garages.
- €# Development proposals seeking to assemble property for the purposes of developing housing other than single-family detached units are incompatible with this neighborhood plan.
- €# Develop a “community clean up” program to give residents the opportunity to dispose of discarded home goods as well as yard waste.



- €# Utilize landscape buffers, building setbacks and other limitations, and development that fits the scale of the neighborhood to function as a transition between the edges of East Rockville and adjacent areas, such as the Stonestreet corridor and Southlawn industrial area.
- €# Conduct a detailed study of the Southlawn industrial area to assess the feasibility of implementing a mixed-use, transitional industrial area in order to reduce the impacts of industrial properties on the East Rockville community. This area would be limited in industrial activity, and include a compliment of residential, retail, and office space to be used by residents.
- €# The choice of developing a crossing of the Metro/CSX rail lines at Westmore Road to connect to MD 355 should be re-examined. Industrial traffic could be diverted around the Lincoln Park and East Rockville neighborhoods if an overpass or entry point were added in this area.
- €# Evaluate the Croydon Park pumphouse for historic district designation, and designate the building as a historic site district.

## **Chapter 4: TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION**

**Goal:** Achieve a lasting resolution to transportation related issues in this neighborhood by addressing non-resident vehicular traffic management while building on the assets to the neighborhood provided by access to the Metro and alternative modes of transportation.

### **Objectives**

1. Implement traffic calming measures to discourage non-resident traffic on internal neighborhood streets and to reduce speeding.
2. Provide safe and accessible routes for pedestrian and bicycle movements throughout the neighborhood, including safe crosswalks.
3. Ensure adequate on-street parking for local residents where off-street parking is not available by implementing effective parking management practices.
4. Encourage use of public transportation to reduce vehicular traffic congestion and improve air quality while keeping these public systems accountable for complying with neighborhood regulations such as noise restrictions and speed limits.
5. Limit and reduce noise and air pollution from transportation facilities.
6. Provide adequate lighting to promote visibility and safety and provide more inviting, enhanced streetscapes.

### **Introduction**

The East Rockville Neighborhood is bordered by major roads and transportation networks to the east (Gude Drive and Norbeck Road), south (Veirs Mill Road), and west (Rockville Pike and Metro/CSX tracks). Interior neighborhood roads are frequently used to accommodate overflow and cut-through traffic to bypass already congested routes in an attempt to shorten commutes and save time. Adjacent industrial uses in the Southlawn area generate truck and industrial vehicle trips through the neighborhood as these entities also seek quicker routes around local congestion. The close proximity of the Rockville Metro station, while an asset to the neighborhood, also places additional pressure on the local road system and creates a burden on neighborhood streets to accommodate overflow parking. The use of neighborhood roads to accommodate non-resident traffic has a number of negative consequences for the community. These consequences include increased noise, safety hazards for pedestrians and bikes associated with increased traffic and speeding, local air quality degradation, and a general loss of neighborhood integrity as cut-through traffic and parking encroachments increase.

Feedback from community residents overwhelmingly rates **location** as a leading strength of the neighborhood, including access to Metro, commuter trains, the Rockville Town Center, Washington D.C., and surrounding metropolitan areas. Juxtaposed

against the strength of the neighborhood's location, **traffic** was identified by residents as their primary concern for improving the quality of life in the community. Major issues identified include traffic congestion, traffic speed, traffic-related noise, commercial and industrial traffic, need for pedestrian and bike connections, lack of adequate parking, and inadequate street lighting.

In addition to addressing the negative consequences of the transportation pressures around and through this neighborhood, this plan also strives to recognize and build on the assets to the community that exist in the form of convenient access to many modes of transportation.

The vision for this neighborhood can be achieved through improvements to pedestrian safety, access, continued promotion of alternative modes of transportation as neighborhood assets, and a dedicated effort on the part of the City and the East Rockville community to address non-resident traffic-related impacts.

### **Current Conditions**

The neighborhood is adjacent to two of the City's top 10 Most Congested Intersections: Veirs Mill Road/First Street at 109% of volume to capacity ratio; Rockville Pike/Park Road/Middle Lane at 96% of capacity. This condition creates pressure on neighborhood roads to accommodate cut-through travel as commuters look to escape long waits at intersections. It is critically important for the future integrity of the neighborhood that effective traffic calming measures be in place prior to increased pressures from adjacent Town Center and Metro development being placed on local roadways. Providing improvements to the major arterials surrounding the neighborhood and implementing traffic circles and calming measures at key locations will prevent new commuters from developing unwanted "cut-through" habits.

#### *Existing traffic calming measures and parking restrictions*

Permit parking has been implemented on residential streets from approximately two blocks north of Park Rd. to the southern edge of the neighborhood bordered by South Stonestreet Avenue and Joseph Street. Gaps in the permit areas occur in several spots, and the restrictions do not extend all the way to Route 28 on the eastern edge of the neighborhood. The City's permit parking program is implemented on a block-by-block basis. Expansion of permit parking in the neighborhood may be desired by residents as parking pressures mount. Information about the City's permit parking program should be made available to residents prior to and during the Metro redevelopment process, and a comprehensive approach to both creating permit parking areas and enforcement should be made part of any traffic demand management programs that are instituted at the time of redevelopment plan approval.

The neighborhood does not currently contain any of the more recent innovations in traffic calming measures that have proven effective in limiting cut-through traffic. There are many alternatives available to closing roads that should be explored for slowing traffic and making local neighborhood roads unattractive alternatives to the major arterials. The potential effectiveness of these alternatives should be considered in comparison to road closures to determine if results can be achieved without the inconvenience and loss of access that occurs with road closures. It is important to maintain access and flow through the community for the convenience of local residents as well as to provide travel alternatives in the case of emergencies and for community safety.

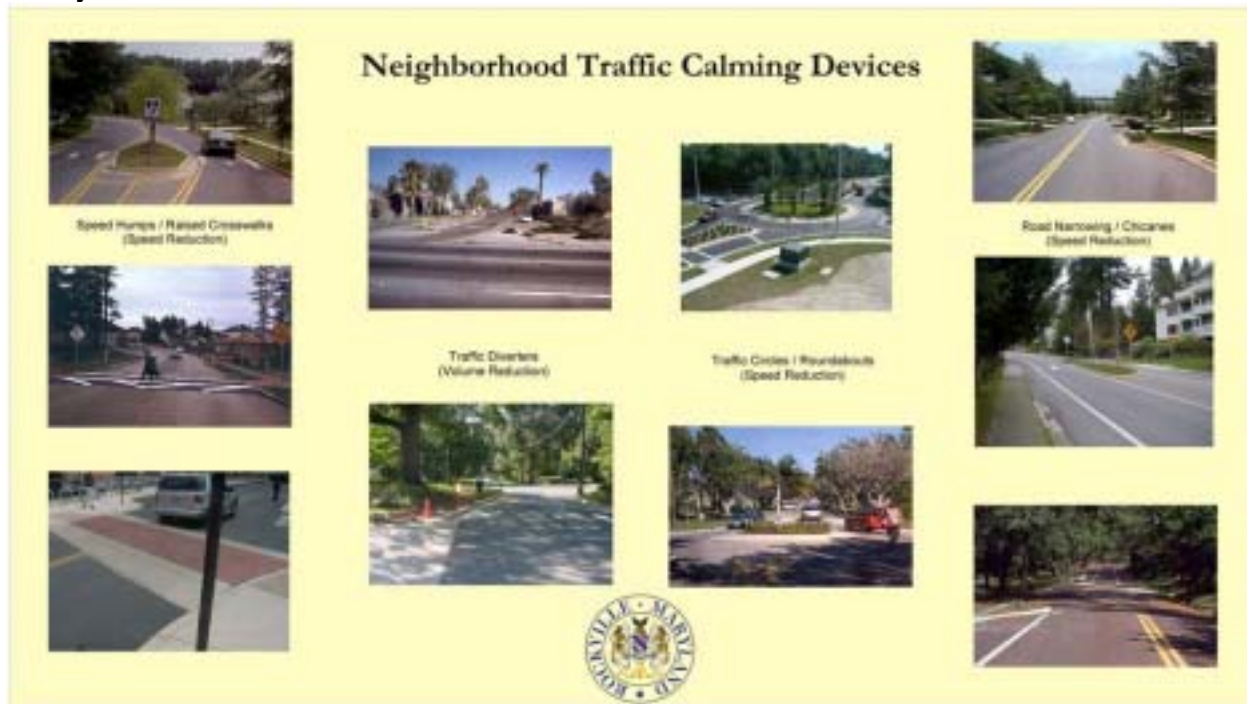


Figure 26. Illustration of a variety of neighborhood traffic calming devices. Implementation of any of these or others would occur through the City's established public process. (Source: City of Rockville Transportation Division)

### *Pedestrian Network and Bikeways*

The proximity of the East Rockville Neighborhood to Town Center and transit hubs creates active pedestrian and bike circulation opportunities throughout the neighborhood, for both commuter access to the County government center and transit hubs, and for recreational access along pathways connecting to local parks and the Rock Creek Regional Park. This proximity also enhances accessibility for the physically challenged. While the anticipated redevelopment of the Metro and Stonestreet corridor has provided a basis for recommending how future pedestrian and bicycle movement is facilitated, their connections both within and through East Rockville have mostly been accomplished already through the development of each subdivision. While this has

produced a vast network of pedestrian sidewalks, there remain areas within the neighborhood where connection is disjointed by a lack of adequate sidewalks. In some

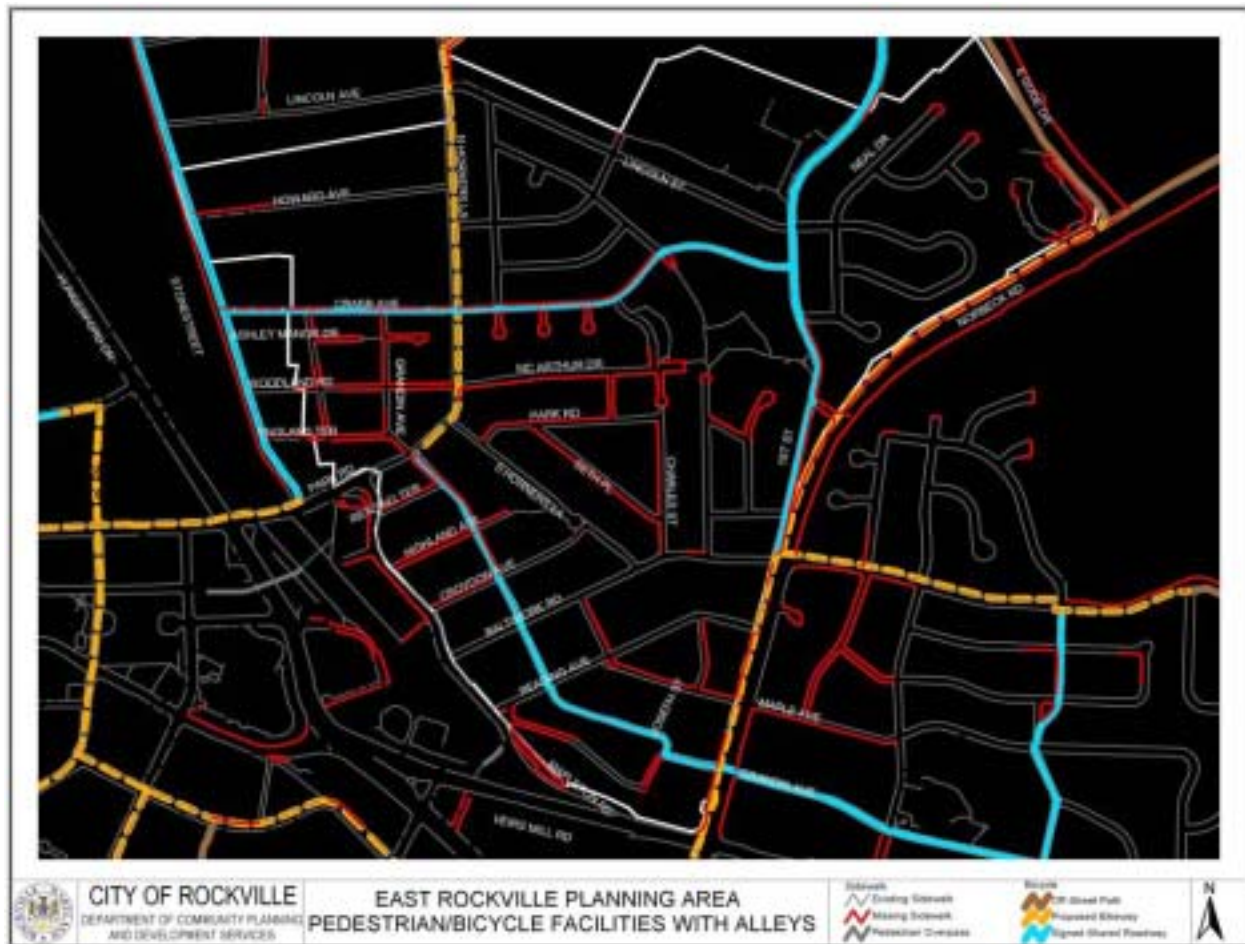


Figure 27. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities

cases this has complicated how residents transfer from one section of the neighborhood to another. The contrast between potential new and existing conditions in East Rockville warrants examination of how to integrate connectivity between edge activity areas and core residential spaces with movement within each through the use of pedestrian facilities.

Currently the most complete sidewalk networks are located in the subdivisions of Maryvale and Burgundy Knolls. All roads in these areas have sidewalks on both sides. The exception to this is Crabb Avenue in Maryvale, which has sidewalks on at least one side of the road. Both Brown's Addition and Harriet Park contain sidewalks on at least one side of those roadways that intersect with each subdivision. Portions of the Croydon Park subdivision have no sidewalk on either side of roadways. This is characteristic of Highland Avenue, Woodland Road, England Terrace, and Grandin Avenue. Rockville Park and Janeta each contain at least one sidewalk on the side of



intersecting roads. The Rockdale Subdivision contain sections of roadway where there is no sidewalk. A border area shared with Rockville Park also has no sidewalk connections. A majority of residential development adjacent to First Street lacks any sidewalk improvements.

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Three pedestrian grade separations crossing public transportation facilities are located in proximity to the East Rockville neighborhood; however there is a large gap between the community and the bridge crossing north of the Metro, making access to the Town Center inconvenient and difficult for pedestrians. The existing crossings occur at Frederick Avenue over the Metro/CSX tracks between Route 355 and North Stonestreet Avenue, the crossway at New Street over the Metro/CSX tracks between South Stonestreet Avenue and Veirs Mill Road near Saint Mary's Church, and the enclosed crossway of the Rockville Metro Station over MD 355. An additional crosswalk between the redeveloped Stonestreet corridor and Town Center should be added in the Crabb Avenue/Woodland Road area.

With regard to bicycle facilities, First Street has been planned for an on-street bikeway as part of the Millennium Trail that will circumnavigate the City. Other streets outlined in the City's 1998 Bikeway Master Plan as receiving routes include Grandin and Crabb Avenues.

The community is very supportive of increased pedestrian access and improved bikeways as an alternative to traditional commuting and for improved recreational opportunities. This plan recommends in several places the integration of these goals with an overall approach to a neighborhood "signature" landscaping and streetscaping plan that enhances the local aesthetics, creates a sense of place, and improves pedestrian and bicycle safety in the community.

## Critical Issues

“Controlling the impacts of commuters from outside the City on Rockville’s streets may be the greatest challenge facing the City over the next 20 years” (from City of Rockville *Comprehensive Master Plan*, November 2002). The East Rockville neighborhood is particularly susceptible to impacts from non-resident traffic due to the major thoroughfares bordering all sides of the community, easy connections afforded by neighborhood streets and the neighborhood’s close proximity to industrial and commercial uses. Associated impacts such as noise and pedestrian safety are also critical issues for this neighborhood. Identifying key pedestrian crossings in the neighborhood, especially on primary streets, that can provide safe circulation and access to the Town Center and Metro station is critical.

A related issue has to do with impacts on the community from adjacent industrial land uses in the Southlawn area. There is a great desire on the part of residents to make neighborhood streets undesirable alternatives for truck and industrial traffic. The noise, exhaust and larger sizes of these vehicles are deemed incompatible with the goals of maintaining quiet, secure residential, pedestrian-friendly street corridors.

Also critical to the future of the neighborhood is the careful integration of future WMATA development plans at the Rockville Metro station with existing neighborhood conditions. The 1982 plan recognized the need for measures to protect the existing neighborhood from new high intensity land uses and traffic associated at Metro stations.

Areas of focus to address these issues include identifying and implementing measures to control cut-through commuter and business-related trips, measures to address transit impacts including coordination with Ride-On bus operations to control speeding and divert not-in-service trips; and measures to mitigate noise impacts from all forms of transportation as well as specific noise problems associated with the Metro station and MD 28.

## Recommendations

A variety of measures have been introduced since the 1982 plan to attempt to address non-resident trips, including construction of the Veirs Mill Rd. ramps, neighborhood parking restrictions, and limitations on access from Route 28 into the community. Additional measures are recommended by this plan to achieve continued improvements and to ensure adequate protection of neighborhood integrity in response to Town Center and Metro station redevelopment pressures.

Steady progress has been made to address pedestrian and bicycle access throughout the neighborhood since the 1982 plan including implementation of City Bikeway Master Plan currently underway with the construction of bikeways along Route 28, construction of new sidewalks and cross-walks. A number of areas for improvement still remain

including the need for additional access to the Town Center, improved pedestrian crossing at Route 28 and Baltimore Road, Route 28 and Veirs Mill Road, and crosswalk access on Park Road/North Horners Lane and Metro parking entrance.

*Objective 1 - Implement traffic calming measures and alternative street configurations to discourage non-resident traffic on internal neighborhood streets and to reduce speeding.*

- ⌘ Construct improvements to surrounding highways (MD 355, MD 28, Veirs Mill Road, including ramps) to ease access and reduce cut-through traffic.
- ⌘ Encourage alternative modes of transportation: Metro, bus, vanpool, bicycles.
- ⌘ Do not implement vehicular connectors between East Rockville and Town Center.
- ⌘ Redesign North Stonestreet Avenue as a Boulevard with landscaped median.
- ⌘ Construct gateway traffic circle at Park Road/Stonestreet Boulevard.
- ⌘ Redesign the merge area from South Stonestreet Boulevard onto Veirs Mill Road.
- ⌘ Implement traffic calming measures at the following locations:
  - § Between Lincoln and Howard Avenues on North Stonestreet Boulevard;
  - § South Stonestreet Boulevard at Baltimore Road;
  - § Baltimore Road at Grandin Avenue and South Horners Lane; and
  - § North Horners Lane at Crabb Avenue and Lincoln Street.
- ⌘ Install signage restricting turns during rush hour traffic.
- ⌘ Pursue options to reduce cut-through industrial traffic from Southlawn Lane onto North Horners Lane including the option of a cul-de-sac terminus of Southlawn Lane.
- ⌘ Post and enforce commercial vehicle restrictions on neighborhood streets.
- ⌘ Study, and if feasible, implement a three-way stop sign on Lincoln Street and Pinewood Road.
- ⌘ Increase City enforcement measures on speeding, traffic and restriction violators, and implement safety awareness campaign.
- ⌘ Re-examine the option of installing a crossover of the Metro-CSX tracks between Westmore Road and MD 355.
- ⌘ Investigate and provide incentives, such as tax credits or other means, to encourage residents to use public transportation rather than cars to reach destinations such as the Rockville Metro station and Town Center.

*Objective 2 - Provide safe and accessible routes for pedestrian and bicycle movements throughout the neighborhood.*

- ⌘ Implement a safe, accessible, and attractive infrastructure of sidewalks and crossings that encourage pedestrian traffic, where feasible. In cases where sidewalks are not feasible along the roadway, alternative routes may be explored.
- ⌘ Provide pedestrian and bicycle bridge over or under Route 355 and the Metro/CSX tracks to facilitate non-vehicular access to shopping, goods and

services in Town Center – an additional crossing between Woodland and Crabb Avenue is the preferred location.

- ⌘ Increase the amount of walk time at all walk signals on Route 355/Route 28.
- ⌘ Provide pedestrian crosswalks at intersecting streets such as North Horners Lane and Baltimore Road, and other locations as needed.
- ⌘ Add “No Turn on Red” sign at traffic light at Metro parking entrance.
- ⌘ Provide crosswalk striping at school bus stops.
- ⌘ Implement a safety awareness campaign for pedestrians.
- ⌘ Implement traffic calming measures targeted to improve bicycle safety along Bicycle Master Plan routes.
- ⌘ Support promenade concept from Park Road across MD 355 to increase pedestrian access between East Rockville and Town Center.
- ⌘ Implement a safe, accessible, and attractive infrastructure of sidewalks and crossings that encourage pedestrian traffic, where feasible. In cases where sidewalks are not feasible along the roadway, alternative routes should be explored.

*Objective 3 - Ensure adequate on-street parking for local residents where off-street parking is not available by implementing effective parking management practices.*

- ⌘ Residential permit parking districts must be enforced.
- ⌘ Provide parking meters along North Stonestreet Avenue.
- ⌘ Step-up code enforcement actions to remove abandoned vehicles in order to free up off-street parking spaces and ticket parking on sidewalks in the industrial areas.
- ⌘ Reduce size of east side “Kiss and Ride” lot and move closer to the station for improved accessibility.

*Objective 4 - Encourage public transportation to reduce vehicular traffic congestion and improve air quality while keeping these public systems accountable for complying with neighborhood regulations such as noise restrictions and speed limits.*

- ⌘ Enact City enforcement to hold transit system accountable for compliance with neighborhood regulations on speed limits, day and night noise levels.
- ⌘ Conduct analysis of existing and appropriate noise levels from train platform announcements, and ensure that adjustments are made accordingly.



*Figure 28. Ride On buses in Metro station bus bays*

- ⌘ Re-route Metro-related bus and automobile traffic away from neighborhood streets.
- § Review Ride-On and Metrobus schedules to determine feasibility of alternative routes.
- § Restrict buses traveling through neighborhood to in-service only.
- ⌘ Any plans for increased parking should include green space and buffers consistent with a comprehensive neighborhood buffer and landscaping plan.

*Objective 5 - Limit and reduce noise and air pollution.*

- ⌘ Mitigate noise from MD 28 and Veirs Mill Road (determine effectiveness of sound barriers versus other noise mitigating measures).
- ⌘ Conduct an environmental effects analysis to determine noise and air quality impacts of proposed Metro expansion and new traffic generation.
- ⌘ Pursue strategies to relieve traffic congestion in order to reduce vehicle idling time and associated air quality impacts.
- ⌘ Promote alternative fuel public transportation vehicles on neighborhood streets.

*Objective 6 - Provide adequate lighting to promote visibility and safety and provide more inviting, enhanced streetscapes.*

- ⌘ Install additional ample lighting on Park Road under rail tracks.
- ⌘ Install attractive, architectural-grade street lighting around Metro and the Stonestreet corridor as part of an integrated streetscape plan. Neighborhood streets such as Baltimore Road, Park Road and North Horners Lane should also be included.
- ⌘ Ensure all crosswalks and other pedestrian crossings are amply lit.

*Objective 7 – Recommend design parameters for Metro station improvements to be implemented in the redevelopment process.*

- ⌘ Direct vehicular access to enter the Metro site from the current entrance on South Stonestreet Boulevard, allowing access to the parking garage and residential units. The Park Road access becomes one-way to allow exits only. An access to the parking garage is created near Croydon Avenue.
- ⌘ Construct an exit tunnel under the tracks from the Metro parking facility to Church Street on the west side.
- ⌘ Exiting traffic from Metro parking shall be directed to Veirs Mill Road to the south and Route 355 to the north. Exit to the east shall be prohibited.
- ⌘ Design vehicular access to Metro station parking facilities that are directed to and from the Veirs Mill Road ramps.
- ⌘ Provide distinctive trolley service from the neighborhood, originating along the re-designed North Stonestreet Boulevard, traveling through Metro area into Town Center.
- ⌘ Extend a bridge and Metro platform access to the north side of Park Road.





*Figure 29. Metro circulation*

## **Chapter 5: THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Goal: Achieve a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable neighborhood that protects and enhances natural resources, in order to maximize environmental benefits and reduce or eliminate negative environmental impacts and consequences for current and future generations.**

### **Objectives**

1. Enhance and preserve community livability and local environmental quality.
2. Protect and improve the condition of existing green space and natural areas and provide adequate public green/open space for the future.
3. Establish watershed protection as an integral part of the neighborhood, protect and improve stream health, and prevent pollution at its source.
4. Encourage sustainable development practices that promote energy efficiency and reduce the consumption of natural resources.
5. Provide educational opportunities and promote the active involvement of local residents to protect and improve their local environment and larger ecosystems.

### **Introduction**

This chapter provides an overview of the existing environmental setting and natural resources of the East Rockville community and establishes a vision and plan for the future environmental condition of the neighborhood and its relationship to the larger community and ecosystem. This plan recommends the pursuit of sustainable practices to improve the neighborhood both within its boundaries and beyond.

### **Current Conditions**

The East Rockville neighborhood is comprised primarily of single-family residential development bordered by the major transportation corridors of the Metro and CSX railroad tracks, and Route 28. The land area flows to the Croydon Creek tributary of the Rock Creek watershed. A small section of Croydon Creek remains in a natural channel, with the majority of the original tributary system flowing through underground stormdrains. The neighborhood has a significant urban tree canopy that contributes to the character of the community and provides environmental benefits through shading and cooling of paved surfaces and rooftops, slowing of stormwater runoff, and local air quality improvement.

This neighborhood underwent most of its development from the 1940s to the 1960s, prior to most of today's environmental regulations and guidelines for development.

Consequently, much of the natural resource base has been disturbed through the loss of natural stream channels, wetlands and contiguous areas of forest and tree canopy. Efforts are now being made to address the effects of outmoded land development practices through stream restoration efforts, urban tree canopy renewal, reducing pollution from street runoff and transportation systems, and community education. Neighborhoods such as East Rockville, with the commitment to maintaining residential housing in close proximity to activity centers and alternative modes of transportation, now provide some of the most promising opportunities to address current pressing environmental issues such as deteriorating air quality and greenhouse gas emissions. The challenge for the neighborhood is to protect and enhance what remains of the natural environment while leading the way for the future by reducing resource consumption and providing opportunities to live, work and pursue societal interests in a more sustainable way.

### *Urban Forestry*

The existing tree canopy in East Rockville provides many benefits to the community, from both an environmental and aesthetic perspective. A major benefit of urban tree canopy is the direct and indirect benefit on local and regional air quality. A healthy, intact tree canopy reduces temperatures through shading, resulting in lower summer cooling costs and energy demands. When building energy use is lowered, pollutant emissions from power plants are also lowered. Trees also directly remove air pollutants via uptake through leaves. Approximately 20 acres of tree canopy will remove a metric ton of air pollution (ozone, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide), and large healthy trees greater than 77 cm in diameter remove approximately 70 times more air pollution annually than small healthy trees (less than 8 cm diameter).

*What is a sustainable neighborhood and how does this concept relate to the environment?*

Sustainability in the context of land use and the built environment can be defined as the efficient use and integration of renewable resources and land use policies to ensure prosperous social and economic living patterns without exhausting available resources. The concept of sustainability has emerged in response to increasing awareness that the ways in which our communities function can profoundly affect our consumption of natural resources, and that to meet the challenges of the future in protecting air quality, water quality and finite natural resources, society must focus efforts starting at the local level to limit over-consumption and resource degradation. The same measures that can be taken to promote more sustainable levels of resource consumption will also promote social, economic and cultural values that define "quality of life" in our community. It is through this integration of environmental, social, economic and cultural values that "sustainable neighborhoods" as well as sustainability for future generations can be achieved.

In addition to environmental benefits such as cooling local streets, reducing summer cooling costs, slowing stormwater runoff and providing air quality benefits, the mature trees in the community also provide a sense of scale to the community and offset the visual impact of adjacent higher density land uses in the Town Center.

### Noise

Transportation related noise impacts in the community have been identified as a critical issue and stem from adjacent roadway noise and from activities associated with the Metro/CSX operations such as track noise and platform loudspeaker announcements and signals.



*Figure 30. View of Metro/MARC station from South Stonestreet Avenue*

The City-wide Comprehensive Plan has recommended that noise levels be studied comprehensively across the major transportation corridors affecting the City to identify problem areas and develop strategies to address excessive noise impacting existing neighborhoods. A range of alternatives will need to be explored, as barrier methods such as noise walls can be very difficult and disruptive to place in

existing communities. Other alternatives may include alternative paving materials that reduce tire vibration, berming and landscaping that can somewhat alter the perception and quality of noise, and methods to reduce indoor noise levels through building envelope alterations.

Addressing noise associated with Metro-related operations as well as buses and other transit services will require coordination with the operations managers as well as careful site design considerations during the redevelopment process to explore effective mitigation and barrier techniques such as sound-absorptive tile and platform decking, berming, and speed restrictions.

### Water Quality

Stormwater runoff in East Rockville is partially treated in several locations within stormwater management basins, notably in Maryvale Park and Redgate Farms. These stormwater management structures help protect Croydon Creek and downstream areas

of Rock Creek by slowing the rate of runoff before it enters a natural stream channel, and by filtering pollutants out of the water. Improvements can be achieved in stream health through upgrading and maintenance of these structures, and through a comprehensive education program to target nutrient reduction and pollution prevention. Improved lawn care practices, awareness about pet waste disposal, and monitoring and enforcement of pollution discharges to the stormdrain system will improve local water quality. A particular emphasis on targeting enforcement actions in the commercial/industrial areas that drain to the local streams must be pursued.



### *Energy Efficiency and Night-Sky Initiatives*

The Town Center and adjacent Metro redevelopment adjacent to the East Rockville neighborhood will bring many desirable mixed-use areas with services for the community. Along with this redevelopment, there will be additional night-time lighting demands to create vibrant streetscapes and preserve public safety. Impacts to the community, such as glare, spill-over light pollution and additional loss of night-sky views can be limited by implementing comprehensive lighting plans that adopt energy-efficient, glare-reducing standards that avoid over-lighting new zones. Good lighting practices promote safety by reducing the loss of night-vision from blinding glare, and avoid casting existing development into shadows as the result of over-lighting new areas. In addition, older, less efficient lighting can be replaced with more efficient, lower-wattage, side-shielded fixtures, thus providing energy-cost savings with no reduction in illumination levels on the streets. This plan recommends that redevelopment adjacent to the East Rockville community conform with the most recent recommendations of the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA), and the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA).

*Figure 31. Croydon Creek*

### **Critical Issues**

Critical issues facing the neighborhood for improving and sustaining environmental quality include the need to address increasing transportation-related noise levels; finding creative ways to obtain additional open space for public use; addressing the needs of an aging urban tree canopy, much of which is on private property; and providing educational tools for residents to aid them in making decisions when it comes to housing renovations, landscaping, and sustainable and energy efficient choices.



An important tool for making progress on several critical issues is the development of a comprehensive neighborhood buffer, landscaping and gateway plan. This plan can address several issues including:

- ## Detailed analysis of gaps in the urban tree canopy and development of strategies for planting in the public right-of-way along with incentives and assistance for home-owners for tree planting and maintenance such as a landscaping easement program;
- ## A plan for the neighborhood edges that incorporates landscaping and berming options for mitigating the effects of noise and that promotes energy-efficient and well-designed lighting that eliminates spill-over and glare into residential areas; and
- ## The use of native landscaping.

Addressing noise impacts in the community is challenging for many reasons. The state has jurisdiction over the management and maintenance of the major arterials that produce much of the transportation-related noise surrounding the community. Analysis of current noise levels should be undertaken to identify priority areas, and a range of options explored to mitigate. One option that has the added benefit of improving home energy efficiency and reducing heating and cooling costs is to retrofit impacted residences with improvements to the building envelope, such as high efficiency window installation and improved exterior wall insulation. In older homes, these measures can significantly reduce interior noise levels, although not exterior noise.



Figure 32. Urban Tree canopy in East Rockville

Challenges in maintaining and improving the urban tree canopy include the need to develop appropriate approaches to filling in canopy gaps on both private and public lands. Conflicts with overhead utilities need to be addressed, as well as the maintenance burden that goes along with large trees on private lots.

## Recommendations

*Objective 1 - Adopt sustainable development patterns that promote energy efficiency and reduce the consumption of natural resources.*

- ⌘ Utilize a Neighborhood Conservation Area to promote sustainable use of the local built environment.
- ⌘ Promote “green” building techniques for all new construction.
  - š High efficiency building techniques and appliances to reduce energy consumption.
  - š Green roof gardens to improve energy efficiency and reduce urban heat island effect.
  - š “Night-sky” sensitive lighting.
- ⌘ Replace older, inefficient, street light fixtures.
- ⌘ Bury overhead wires with street improvements and new construction to allow more effective urban forest canopy.
- ⌘ Establish user-friendly pathways and walking routes to encourage more walking for errands and easy access to transit system.
- ⌘ Develop/promote tax incentives/grants for residents to improve energy efficiency and environmental performance of homes.

*Objective 2 - Protect and improve the condition of existing green space and natural areas and provide adequate public green/open space for the future.*

- ⌘ Determine environmentally beneficial use of Maryvale Park.
  - š Create a pond with walking trail/recreational amenities in place of existing dry pond.
  - š Establish partnership with Maryvale Elementary School and Montgomery County Public Schools to maintain and improve Maryvale School ballfields in order to provide higher quality and more accessible location for recreation fields (dry pond not effective as current location).



*Figure 33. Maryvale Park ballfield*

- ⌘ Create a central landscaping/green “showcase” that creates an attractive landscaping theme for the community to enhance open space areas and aesthetically unify the neighborhood.

- €# Promote backyard wildlife habitats and native landscaping throughout community to improve natural areas and reduce the need for fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides.
- €# Reforest area of stormdrain easement between Howard and Crabb Avenues, as permitted. Pursue options with landowners to protect and naturalize this area.
- €# Establish a child/park space ratio target.
- €# Identify potential sites for “pocket parks” and passive community gathering areas. One potential park site is located on the north side of Crabb Avenue, just east of the redevelopment area on Stonestreet Avenue.
- €# Improve Urban Tree Canopy:
  - § Conduct neighborhood tree survey to identify planting needs on public and private property and establish recommended planting sites to fill in tree canopy gaps;
  - § Use results to update current street tree plan; develop implementation strategy with particular focus on mechanisms to address tree canopy gaps on private property such as a landscaping easement program and other homeowner incentives; and
  - § Develop education and technical assistance program to improve tree health on private property and encourage more homeowners to retain and/or replant trees to maintain and improve the urban tree canopy.
- €# Increase local biodiversity through the encouragement of native landscaping in residential areas and the control of invasive non-native plants.
- €# Develop native landscaping plans for City parks and rights-of-way to improve biodiversity, reduce maintenance needs and promote organic techniques for weed control and fertilizing.



Figure 34. Croydon Creek watershed

- ≠ Develop a landscape easement program to encourage commercial property owners to provide landscaping beyond what is required.
- ≠ Identify potential sites for “pocket parks” and passive community gathering areas. One potential park site is located on the north side of Crabb Avenue, just east of the redevelopment area on Stonestreet Avenue.

*Objective 3 - Establish watershed protection as an integral part of the neighborhood, protect and improve stream health, and prevent pollution at its source.*

- ≠ Restore Croydon Creek to the highest level of urban stream health possible
  - š Expand buffer along stream
  - š Create a point of access to the creek’s edge
  - š Improve aquatic life conditions
  - š Reduce effects of uncontrolled stormwater runoff
- ≠ Establish a stream monitoring program and promote student watershed stewardship projects
- ≠ Encourage the use of rain barrels and rain gardens (with appropriate education on mosquito control)
- ≠ Conduct neighborhood survey to identify underground oil/chemical storage tanks
  - š Make citizens aware of grant availability for removal programs
- ≠ Develop neighborhood pollution prevention program and pursue pet waste reduction measures including pet waste receptacles in all East Rockville parks.
- ≠ Develop pollution prevention plans with local businesses.
- ≠ Work with MCPS to establish a green roof on the Maryvale Elementary School.

*Objective 4 - Enhance and preserve community livability and local environmental quality.*

- ≠ Reduce impacts of transportation related noise and traffic impacts on local neighborhood.
  - š Promote transit solutions along the MD28 (Veirs Mill Rd., First St., Norbeck Rd.) corridor, such as busway, Metro shuttle, electric transit, etc.
  - š Mitigate noise from MD28 and Veirs Mill Rd. (determine effectiveness of sound barriers versus other noise mitigating measures).
  - š Encourage design of redevelopment projects adjacent to the Metro/CSX tracks to reduce noise transmission from the rail corridor to the neighborhood.

- ## Reduce impacts of future downtown construction:
  - š Establish lighting guidelines to promote the use of well-designed, energy efficient lighting that avoids spill over of light into adjacent residential areas.
  - š Address noise impacts from new development.
  - š Develop an attractive and appropriately scaled skyline.
  - š Establish landscaped buffer between existing residential areas and new Town Center and Metro redevelopment; establish landscaping guidelines for redevelopment that ensure adequate setbacks from existing residential areas with particular focus on what is defined as a rear vs. front or side setback.
- ## Reduce impacts on local air and water quality through review and tracking of development in adjacent light industry areas. Pursue pollution prevention partnerships with businesses and any necessary enforcement mechanisms.
- ## Reduce impacts of transportation related noise and traffic impacts on local neighborhood.
  - š Promote transit solutions along the MD28 (Veirs Mill Rd., First St., Norbeck Rd.) corridor, such as busway, Metro shuttle, electric transit, etc.)
  - š Mitigate noise from MD28 and Veirs Mill Rd. (determine effectiveness of sound barriers versus other noise mitigating measures).
  - š Encourage design of redevelopment projects adjacent to the Metro/CSX tracks to reduce noise transmission from the rail corridor to the neighborhood.

*Objective 5 - Provide educational opportunities and promote the active involvement of local residents to protect and improve their local environment and larger ecosystems.*

- ## Establish community “green-up” day and provide education and outreach materials through variety of mechanisms including Rockville Reports, local newsletters, and the Croydon Creek Nature Center.
- ## Spotlight community activities on City Cable.
- ## Provide native landscaping assistance information and develop urban tree canopy maintenance and easement or incentive program for homeowners and commercial property owners.

## **Chapter 6: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

**GOAL:** To implement the recommendations of the East Rockville Neighborhood Plan.

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Establish priorities, timeframes, responsible parties and strategies for the implementation of the recommendations of the East Rockville Neighborhood Plan.

### **Overall Strategy**

Implementation strategy is critical to the success of any Master Plan that is attempting to achieve critical change. If a Plan cannot be or is not implemented, then the planning exercise will have been futile and the stakeholders will become frustrated. The Plan therefore outlines a series of action steps that can be taken, with associated timeframes for each. The assigned timeframes are indicative of the priorities as well as available resources. The implementation steps are categorized into catalyst construction projects, and legislative remedies.

Because the Plan recommends major redevelopment in the Stonestreet corridor and on the Rockville Metro station site, much of the implementation is dependent on the timing of the redevelopment. The two redevelopment projects that could be catalysts to the redevelopment efforts are the redevelopment of the Rockville Metro station and the redevelopment of the School Board-owned property on North Stonestreet Avenue. The Plan recommends that the City work very closely with Montgomery County Public Schools and WMATA to facilitate these redevelopments so that they occur as quickly as possible. However, the groundwork for the public improvements that are necessary to support this redevelopment must be accomplished in advance.

Implementation requires the effort of a series of stakeholders, including neighborhood residents, the City of Rockville, various state and federal transportation agencies, property owners, the East Rockville Civic Association, the Lincoln Park Civic Association, WMATA, and private developers, among others. These parties will need to develop a close working relationship to allow the recommendations to move forward.

### **Legislative Steps**

Often the outcome of a Master Planning process will require changes in certain parameters affecting the planning area. In the case of East Rockville, with major redevelopment and change in character planned for the Stonestreet Avenue and Rockville Metro station areas planned, the zoning needs to be changed. It should be



noted that the TC-1 and TC-2 Zones were recommended by the *Town Center Master Plan*, and have not been created by zoning text amendment yet. This is expected to occur in 2003. The TC-1 Zone has a maximum 1.0 FAR limitation, and the TC-2 Zone has a maximum FAR limitation of 2.0.

### Zoning Changes

Based on the recommendations expressed in the Plan, the following zoning changes are recommended, as shown on the preliminary zoning map. Please note that final recommended zoning changes will result from the Implementation Strategies study, which is discussed later.

1. Rezone all properties on North Stonestreet Avenue, from Park Road northward that are currently in the I-1 Zone to the TCE Zone, with the exception of the properties at 309 and 315 Howard Avenue. These two properties should be rezoned to the R-60 Zone, with a recommendation for townhouse development via the Residential Townhouse (RTH) Special Development procedure.) One property, currently owned by MCPS on the west side of North Stonestreet Avenue, but south of the proposed circle, would be rezoned from the R-60 Zone to the TCE Zone.
2. Rezone the east side of the Rockville Metro station property from I-1 to the TC-2 Zone, with residential proximity slope, as shown in Chapter 2.
3. Rezone the properties fronting the west side of South Stonestreet Avenue south of the Rockville Metro station (approximately 1.588 acres) from the I-1 Zone to the TC-2 Zone with the residential proximity slope.

The intent of the new TCE zone is to provide for a more varied mix of retail, office, multifamily residential and personal service uses in the corridor. Although based on the TC-1 Zone, the permitted uses in the TCE Zone will need to be studied and reviewed to ensure that the new zone will meet the intent of the Plan. For example, the use category of libraries, museums and art galleries and studios is not currently permitted in the TCO-1 or draft TC-1 Zone, but should be in the TCE Zone. In addition, industrial arts space may also be appropriate, and live work units should be expressly permitted in the zone. This will require an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, along with appropriate standards. Some of the uses that exist in the I-1 Zone may also be permitted in the new TCE Zone, while other uses in the corridor will be grandfathered. Although the subsequent *Implementation Strategy Study* and zoning text amendments will evaluate the permitted and grandfathered uses in the new zones, this Plan recommends explicitly that uses to support the cultural district concept, including the category of “libraries, museums, and art galleries,” be added as a permitted uses in the TCE Zone.

A zoning mechanism that allows for existing uses in the corridor to continue operations, along with potential incentives for owners to undertake property upgrades, should be

determined. In addition, a zoning mechanism should encourage redevelopment in the corridor, and should be considered in the Implementation Strategy study. The Plan recommends that the Sectional Map Amendment process that will implement the zoning changes that result from the study be commenced immediately upon adoption of that study. This will allow the changes to be made in about 4 to 6 months following completion of the study.

The Plan recommends that the Section Map Amendment process that will implement the zoning changes be commenced immediately upon adoption of the Neighborhood Plan. This will allow the changes to be made in about 4 to 6 months.

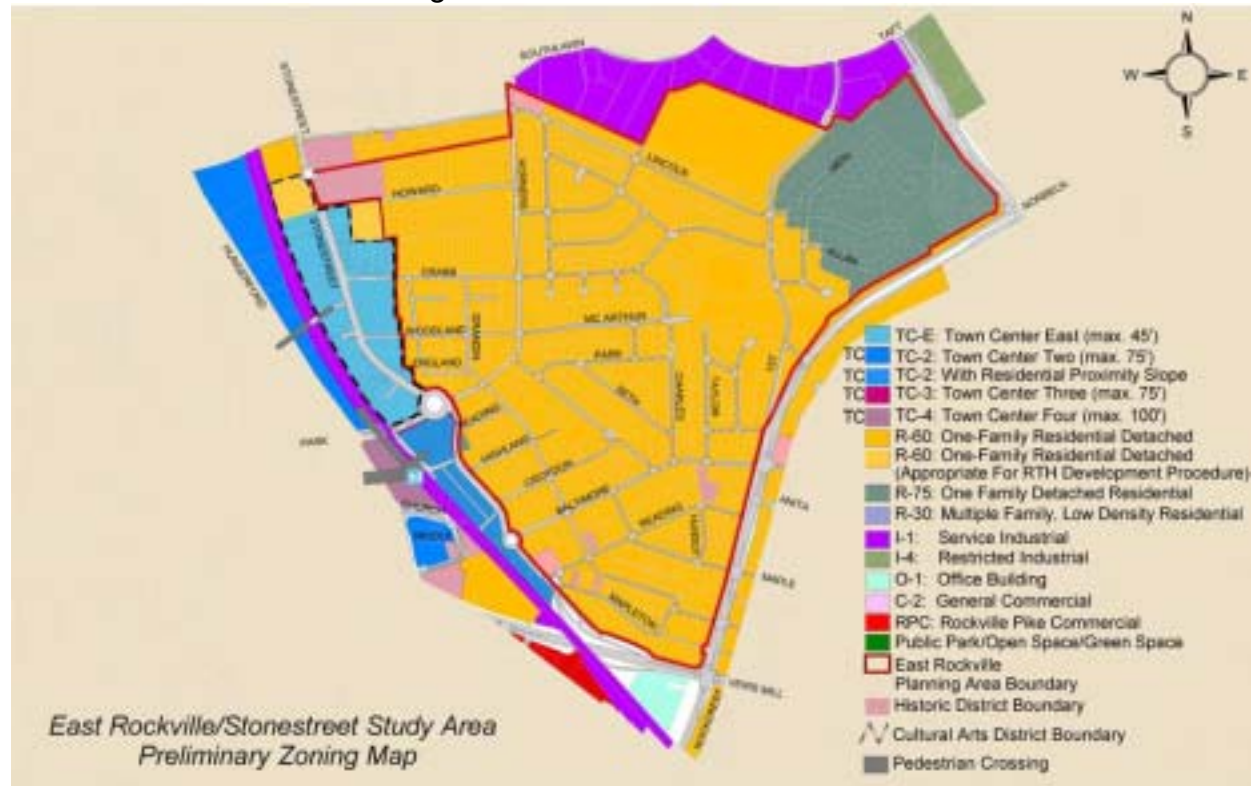


Figure 35. Preliminary Zoning Map

### Other Legislative Changes

In conjunction with this, the City should pursue the “Arts and Entertainment District” designation that has been awarded to downtown Silver Spring and downtown Bethesda in order to encourage and promote the redevelopment of the North Stonestreet/Town Center East area as a cultural arts district. This designation is sponsored by the State of Maryland and is administered by the Department of Business and Economic Development. Some of the benefits of this designation include property tax credits for renovation of existing space to be used by artists and arts-related purposes, exemption from admissions and amusement taxes and financial assistance from the Maryland Economic Assistance Fund, among others. The application should be filed in the next application cycle upon adoption of the Neighborhood Plan.



Figure 36. Illustrative of East Rockville Neighborhood Plan

Another potential legislative implementation step is to provide for the creation of landscape and/or art easement programs, in order to encourage the provision of attractive landscaping and art in private and public development. This would potentially provide a financial incentive, such as a tax credit grant program or direct participation, in return for the City holding an easement, thus ensuring they are maintained over time.

## Public Projects

The following are critical public improvement projects that are essential to the success of the Plan, and therefore should be added to the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) as soon as possible.

### 1. Stonestreet Avenue Realignment and Reconstruction

*Priority:* within 5 years; tied to redevelopment of the Metro station

*Project Description:* The transformation of Stonestreet Avenue from industrial corridor to an attractive boulevard will require realignment and reconstruction of the entire roadway between Park Road and Lincoln Avenue. This will be



accomplished in conjunction with the reconfiguration of the Stonestreet Avenue/Park Road intersection into a traffic circle with the four intersecting streets. The segment of the roadway between Woodland Road and Park Road would be realigned to the east to connect the current Woodland/North Stonestreet intersection to the proposed traffic circle, which is several hundred feet east of the existing Park Road/North Stonestreet Avenue intersection.



Figure 37. Illustrative of Stonestreet reconstruction

The existing 60-foot wide right-of-way for North Stonestreet Avenue will need to be expanded to accommodate the new cross-section of the roadway. The roadway will include a landscaped median with a minimum width of eight to ten feet, one travelway in each direction, on-street parking spaces on both sides of the street, and a wide pedestrian zone of approximately 20 feet, including street tree planting areas and pedestrian walkways. This will necessitate a right-of-way width of approximately 85 feet.

At the north end, a smaller-scale traffic circle should be constructed between Howard Avenue and Lincoln Avenue to clearly delineate the end of the mixed-use area and the beginning of the residential neighborhood. The circle also has the function of providing an easy turnaround for the proposed shuttle to run along the Stonestreet corridor.

South Stonestreet Avenue is currently a four-lane undivided roadway with a 65-foot right-of-way. It may be possible and desirable to upgrade the cross-section to include a landscaped median and 20-foot wide sidewalks, particularly on the Metro station side. Any upgrades to South Stonestreet Avenue should preserve the existing mature trees along the Metro station frontage. A traffic circle at the intersection of Baltimore Road and South Stonestreet Avenue may also be desirable to funnel Metro-bound traffic into the station and away from residential streets.

*Responsibility:* This project should be implemented primarily by the City of Rockville in acquiring property for the rights-of-way. However, the City could potentially partner with others, including but not limited to, private developers for the redevelopment of the residual land into the type of structures that are desired.

## 2. Pedestrian Promenade Extensions

### a. Metro Site Extension

*Priority:* within 5 years; tied to redevelopment of the Metro station

*Project Description:* The extension of the pedestrian promenade originating in the Town Center is a key public improvement recommended by the Plan. As recommended in the *Town Center Master Plan*, the promenade will function as an efficient pedestrian link between the station and Town Center. It would connect to the Metro platform at a level above the tracks, and would transition down to the existing promenade between 255 Rockville Pike and 51 Monroe Street in Town Center via a series of grade changes in the form of a public plaza. On the East Rockville side of the Metro station, the grade changes would have to be accomplished via a stair and elevator tower, which could become a key architectural element on the East Rockville side of the station. This could be a

clock tower or similar feature, which should be incorporated into the refacing or redesign of the east side of the Metro station.

b. New Town Center Extensions

*Priority:* within 5 years; tied to redevelopment of the Metro station

*Project Description:* An integral part of the promenade is an extension north of the current Metro station platform, across Park Road. This would allow safe pedestrian passage to the redeveloped areas along Route 355 and the North Stonestreet corridor as well as the core of Town Center. In coordination with this extension, the new structures will help block the view of the railroad bridges and enhance the entrance experience to East Rockville via Park Road. An underpass north of Park Road will enable pedestrians

and cyclists easy access to North Stonestreet Boulevard.



Figure 38. Promenade extensions

The Plan recognizes that engineering feasibility analysis will likely identify the best location for these northward extensions. The Plan therefore makes no preference for the preferred location, except that the promenade should be in close proximity to the existing tracks. It may be on the east or west sides of the tracks, or even between the tracks.

*Responsibility:* City of Rockville, private developers, WMATA, CSX, SHA, Private Developers, ERCA

3. Pedestrian and Bikeway Connection

*Priority:* within 5 years

*Project Description:* The Plan recommends a pedestrian and bikeway connection from East Rockville, between Crabb Avenue and Woodland Road at North Stonestreet Boulevard, either over or under the Metro/CSX tracks and MD 355 to connect with Town Center in the vicinity of Beall Avenue. This will provide enhanced connectivity for residents and the developing Town Center, especially the new Rockville Regional Library at the corner of Maryland Avenue Extended and Beall Avenue.



Figure 39. Pedestrian and bikeway connection

To implement this recommendation, there may be some



right-of-way to be required or an easement to be secured. In addition, agreement with Metro and CSX will be required to allow the connection to be under or above the tracks.

*Responsibility:* City of Rockville, WMATA, SHA, CSX, ERCA

#### 4. Traffic Calming Measures

*Priority:* with 2 years

*Project Description:* The Plan recommends a series of traffic calming measures throughout the neighborhood on streets with cut-through traffic problems. Traffic calming measures are included in the City's FY2003 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for Baltimore Road and North Horners Lane. It is the intent of including this recommendation to ensure that adequate funding is provided in the CIP to address all of the traffic calming measures addresses in the Plan.



Figure 40. Traffic Calming Measures

*Responsibility:* City of Rockville, ERCA

#### 5. Rockville Science Complex

(Priority: in conjunction with the redevelopment of North Stonestreet Boulevard)

The Rockville Science Complex can be a potential anchor for the corridor and establish the area as a destination by itself. The complex would consist of interactive displays and historical museum that can build on the high technology and biotechnology industries that are located in and around the City of Rockville.

The City of Rockville will need to take a lead role in funding the feasibility study, property assemblage and construction. However, crucial roles will be required of the Rockville Consortium for Science and technology-related businesses.

*Responsibility:* City of Rockville, ERCA, Rockville Consortium for Science, private science and technology companies, State of Maryland agencies and Federal agencies such as the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) and the National Institute of Health (NIH).

## 6. Maryvale Park and School property redesign

The City will need to coordinate closely with the Board of Education in order to achieve the ballfield relocation from Maryvale Park to Maryvale School, in order to facilitate the transition of Maryvale park to a passive, environmentally sound facility.

## **Recommendations for Further Study**

The complexities associated with redevelopment of the Stonestreet corridor and the Rockville Metro station site warrant planning and engineering studies that are beyond the scope of this neighborhood plan. The Plan therefore recommends as an immediate implementation step, the undertaking of an Implementation Strategy study. This study will incorporate a detailed review of various components to implement the Plan, which could include a market analysis for the redevelopment areas, determination of an appropriate zoning mechanism to allow for redevelopment in the Stonestreet corridor, potential road realignment studies and the strategy for accomplishing the public improvements that are recommended for the corridor. The study will also identify specific uses to be included in the TCE Zone, and delineate the language for potential grandfathered status. This study will be accomplished and funded as part of the North Stonestreet Redevelopment Plan project, which is included in the City's FY2004 Capital Improvements Program. The implementation strategies study would be conducted with the full participation of neighborhood residents, commercial property owners, business owners, WMATA and other affected entities in the East Rockville neighborhood.

Also recommended for further study by City staff is the potential replanning of the Southlawn industrial area that borders both the East Rockville and Lincoln Park communities. As recommended in the Plan, this area should be examined with the goal of creating a development pattern that is compatible with the community which it abuts. This may involve new development standards, but more importantly a potential new zoning category that could allow some low-intensity industrial use along with new retail, small-scale office and residential uses. Equally important would be a transportation study of the area that would determine how commercial traffic can be managed in the area while also not impacting the residential community as it does currently. This small area study of land use and transportation in this area should be undertaken immediately upon adoption of this Plan, so that its resulting recommendations may be incorporated into the City's planning and capital improvements plan as soon as possible.

## **Required Coordination**

The East Rockville Civic Association, neighborhood residents, and the City of Rockville are obvious partners in implementing many of the action steps outlined in the Neighborhood Plan. However, there are other important partners, including the Lincoln Park Civic Association, Montgomery County, WMATA, CSX, the Maryland State Highway Administration, the Montgomery County Board of Education, the Greater

Rockville Partnership (GRP), property owners, representatives of the art and cultural communities and private developers, among others. It is recommended that the East Rockville Citizens Association (ERCA) and members of the Plan's Advisory Group collaborate closely to move these projects and implementation steps forward.

# **East Rockville Neighborhood Plan**

## **APPENDIX**

*The following documents were prepared by the City of Rockville for the East Rockville Neighborhood Plan process.*

## **Appendix 1: Background Report**

### **Existing Conditions**

#### **Land Use**

The East Rockville Neighborhood is primarily a single-family residential community surrounded by a variety of non-residential uses and separated from the Rockville Town Center by the Metro/railroad tracks and adjacent industrial area. Almost 90 percent of the land acreage is residential. East Rockville began as a residential expansion of Rockville, built with access to Town Center and the rail transit and later, the highway corridors to Washington DC. Homes are moderately priced and benefit from the central location. There are also 56 townhouses (single-family attached units), in addition to the 1,009 single-family detached homes.

Limited convenience retail opportunities are located within and adjacent to the neighborhood with three small stores and a neighborhood shopping center, totaling less than 10,000 square feet for the entire neighborhood. A general retail convenience store is located at the corner of Reading and South Stonestreet Avenues and consists of a small, 4,000 square foot, grocery and retail outlet. Another small grocery store of 620 square feet occupies the northwest corner of North Horners Lane and Howard Avenue. This tiny retail store is non-conforming and has very limited inventory. The Maryvale Center, a small shopping center of 5,000 square feet at the northeast corner of North Horners Lane and Lincoln Street, has several stores and a carryout. The proximity to the Town Center's retail allows residents of East Rockville short trips for retail service.

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Rockville Metrorail and MARC train station, along with the industrial uses along North and South Stonestreet Avenue form a western boundary to the Planning Area. The Metro station and parking lot were mentioned as a prime location for redevelopment in the Town Center Master Plan. The current station has two levels with a pedestrian underpass and a covered platform for passengers. There also is a pedestrian bridge that connects the station to the Town Center. Two parking lots totaling 6.4 acres, with parking for 644 cars (524 east and 120 west) and bus turnaround are adjacent to the east side of the tracks and a 3 acre parking lot with a 4.6 acre bus turnaround is on the west sides of the train tracks. There are about 4-5,000 passengers using the station and its parking facilities each day. Pedestrians also use the overhead walkway to cross MD 355.

The industrial properties within the Stonestreet study area include a variety of heavy equipment sales, auto repair facilities, body shops, car rental, contractors, printers and related commercial uses. North Stonestreet Avenue north of Howard Avenue is owned by the Montgomery County Board of Education to store and print textbooks and school

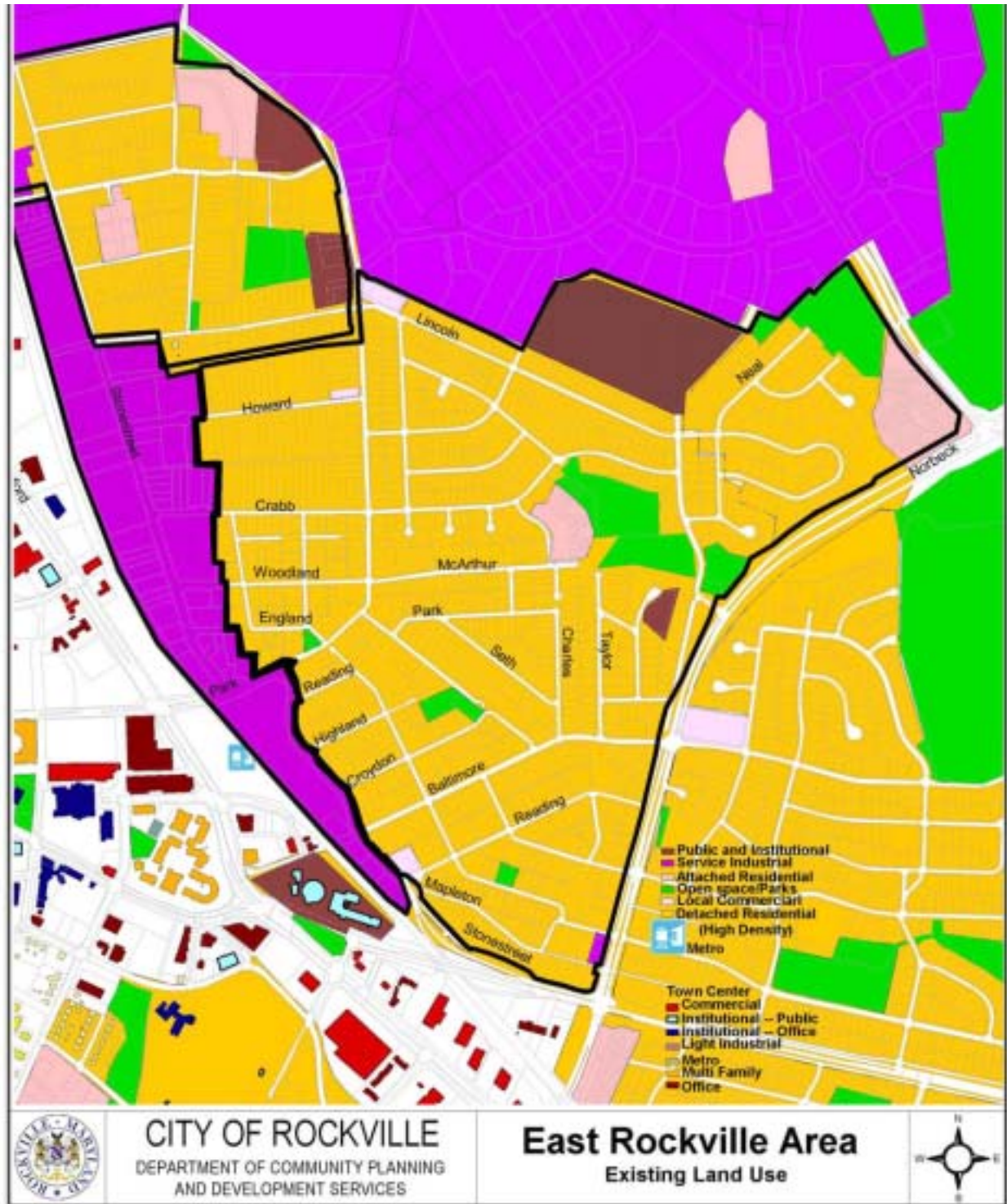


Figure 41. Proposed Land Use Map



40 to 400 feet wide with acreage of .2 to 4 acres. There are a profusion of driveways and entry points serving each property but the traffic on North Stonestreet Avenue is relatively light with less than 3,000 trips a day.

## Zoning

The most common zoning categories in East Rockville are the R-60 (923 homes) and R-75 (86 homes and 43 townhouses) residential zones for detached one-family dwellings on 6,000 or 7,500 square foot minimum lots. Home Occupation uses are also permitted and include dressmaking, tailoring, millinery and sewing of fabric for custom apparel and home furnishings. Uses permitted by grant of Special Exception are housing for the elderly or handicapped, childcare and philanthropic institutions, as well as accessory apartments.

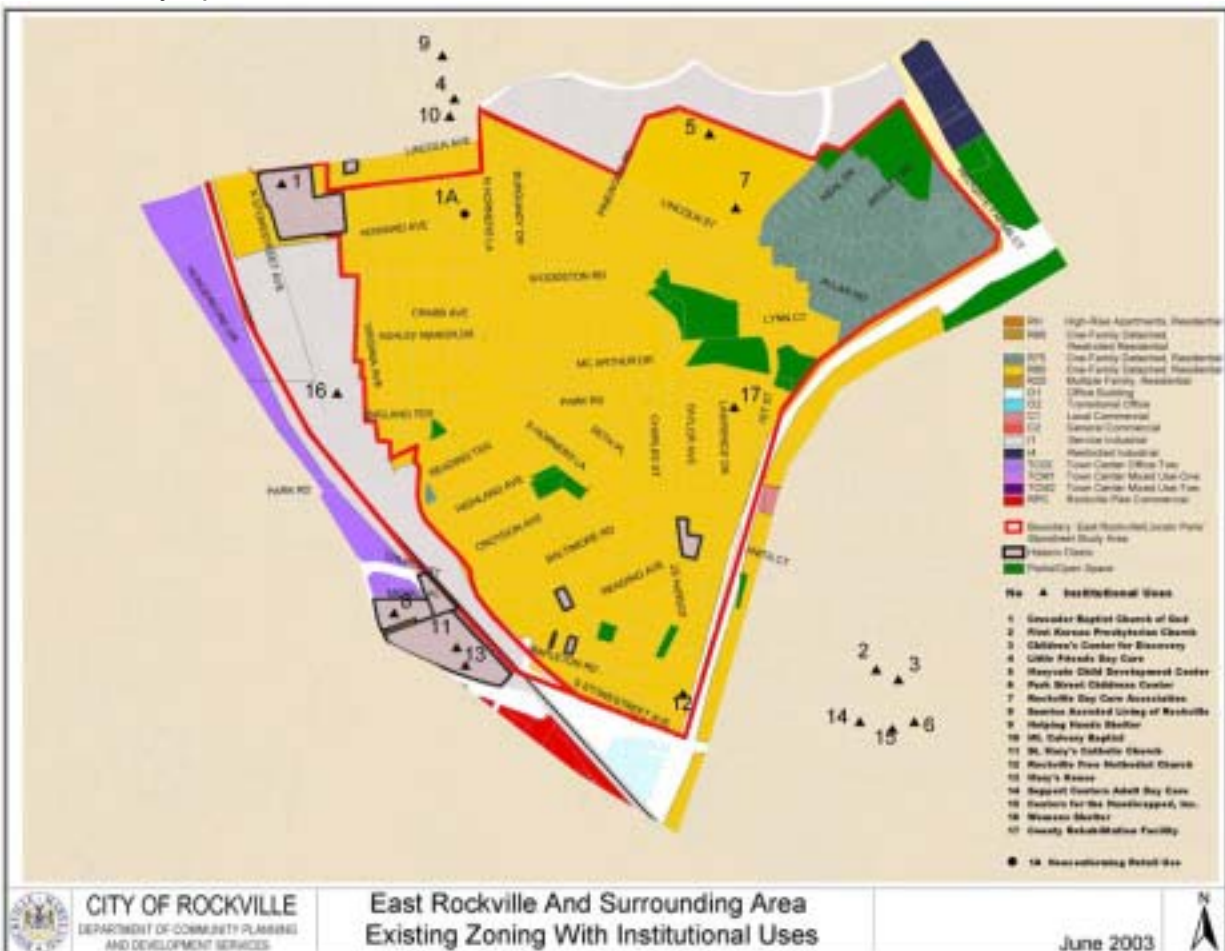


Figure 42. Existing Land Use

Pertinent zoning requirements for the R-60 and R-75 Zones are important to East Rockville housing in that they determine the parameters of the built environment.

- ## Current minimums for minimum lot frontage are sixty feet, with thirty-five feet allowed if the lot width is sixty feet at the building line.
- ## Maximum lot coverage is thirty-five percent, and maximum building height is thirty-five feet, which could potentially allow for a substantial increase in building size and height (35% of a 10,000 square foot lot is 3,500 square feet).
- ## Setbacks are twenty-five feet (front), eight feet side for R-60 (nine feet for R-75) and 20 feet (rear). Accessory buildings (garages or storage) are allowed within the R-60 Zone with maximum twenty-five percent rear yard coverage and fifteen foot height limit.
- ## Home Occupations are allowed for the mentioned uses with no separate entrance or advertising sign and a maximum of twenty percent of the floor area or three hundred square feet whichever is less. There is also a restriction on outside assistance and motorized tools must be electric and not greater than three horsepower.
- ## Parking is allowed (required for non-residential) for passenger vehicles and not more than one delivery type commercial vehicle not exceeding three-quarter ton capacity or one truck and one trailer that has been issued a special permit (section 23-27) but not used as a dwelling. The trailer must be parked behind the front building line.

Another zoning category is C-1 (Local Commercial) and applies to the small shopping center on Lincoln Street and the store on South Stonestreet Avenue. The C-1 Zone is designed for neighborhood convenience and excludes a wider range of retail and office uses more common to arterial highways.

The I-1 (Service Industrial) Zone occupies most of the Stonestreet corridor from Park Road to Howard Avenue, as well as south of the Metro station along the west side of South Stonestreet Avenue. This zone combines retail with wholesale and light industrial to serve residents. Certain offices such as auto rental, medical services and banks (as a special exception) are also permitted. Lumberyards, construction equipment and furniture sales are typical of retail that is part of home and business services. Printers, cabinet making, sheet metal, and sign fabrication are typical of light industrial uses along with contractors and appliance repair.

### **Circulation and Transit**

The East Rockville Neighborhood is bordered on two sides by a major highway and rail corridor. MD 28 (First Street/Norbeck Road) forms the eastern boundary, while the CSX Railroad/Metro tracks form the western boundary. Veirs Mill Road forms the southern boundary. These two transportation corridors carry 30,000-50,000 automobile trips each in a 24-hour period. Noise, dust and pedestrian hazards are created by the traffic on these roads. Traffic along MD 355 is a barrier to east/west pedestrian movement from East Rockville to the Town Center.

The Neighborhood has advantages in location near Town Center and regional transit systems. The rail line is the main north/south commuter and freight line for the MARC

commuter line and CSX freight lines. Rockville is a main stop with twenty weekday trains. A METRO Rail line also runs parallel to the CSX tracks and serves as the main north/south rail corridor for suburbs north of Washington D.C. with a train every ten minutes. The Rockville Station is a transfer point for MARC commuters connecting by Metrorail to Washington DC. Rockville has 380 daily passengers boarding at the MARC Station, which is 7% of the MARC Train Brunswick Line passengers. The daily Metrorail passengers boarding at Rockville has increased for the last two years to 3,915 in 2001 which is still below the highest of 3,966 in 1989. An AMTRAK Train also stops in Rockville several times each week providing a connection between the east coast and the Midwest. This neighborhood station is part of a local, regional and national system with over 4,000 passengers daily.

Major neighborhood collector streets are North Horners Lane, with 8,000 trips per day, North Stonestreet Avenue, with over 2,500 trips per day and Baltimore Road at over 3,000 trips per day. Park Road is the main entry into East Rockville and leads to several intersections for Stonestreet Avenue and Horners Lane. North Horners between Pinewood Road and Howard Avenue carries 7-16 tractor-trailers and 450 single unit trucks each day. Some northbound traffic turns right onto Southlawn Lane into the industrial area reducing traffic on North Horners Lane north of Southlawn Lane from 8,000 trips to 5,000 trips. Truck traffic above Southlawn Lane is also lower by approximately 30%. Stonestreet Avenue serves the industrial properties along the railroad but has only 2,500 trips each day with 5-8 tractor-trailers and 310 single unit trucks. South Stonestreet Avenue has 4,400 trips southbound and 5,500 northbound. Traffic bound for the Metro station may be causing the increase on this part of Stonestreet because south of Baltimore Road daily trips drop to 2,598 northbound and 2,051 southbound. Stonestreet truck traffic south of Park Road is also less with 130 trucks and only 2-3 tractor-trailer trucks per day northbound and 180 trucks and 3 tractor-trailers southbound. Baltimore Road is second only to North Horners Lane as an auto and truck route with 3,000 trips and 200 trucks daily.

Traffic within the neighborhood is normal for secondary residential streets at about 200-500 trips per day. Several previous street closures have occurred to combat excessive cut-through traffic. There are two traffic lights along Park Road near the Metro station but no other signals within the neighborhood. Crabb Avenue has more traffic than a typical neighborhood street with over one thousand trips between Charles Street and Longwood Drive and over 60 trucks a day. West of North Horners Lane traffic drops off to a residential level of 500 trips but still has over 40 trucks a day. First Street shows a high of 1,805 trips northbound each day (between Lincoln and Taft Streets) with 140 trucks that compare to the 2,000 trips with 180 trucks on North Stonestreet Avenue. The truck traffic diminishes west of 1st Street by half but still shows a high level of truck traffic for a residential neighborhood. Lincoln Street has 1,096 trips daily with 50 to 60 trucks. Crabb and Lincoln are connections to First Street, Norbeck Road and nearby industrial uses.

Sidewalks are generally in good repair and have adequate placement within the neighborhood. The City's Transportation staff has completed a survey to identify

missing sidewalk links. Sidewalks are missing on Highland Avenue, England Terrace and all of the cul-de-sacs off Crabb Avenue. Woodland and Mapleton Roads have part of the street served with sidewalks and many streets such as Park Road and McArthur Drive have one side served. The real challenge for pedestrians is crossing the major streets on the edges of the neighborhood. MD 355 is particularly difficult to cross currently because of the signal timing. First Street/Norbeck Road (MD 28) also has very heavy and fast traffic with no sidewalks. The excellent location of East Rockville Neighborhood would benefit pedestrian access to the Town Center if traffic were parted to allow residents to cross. A pedestrian bridge is available across MD 355, from the Metro Station to the Town Center. A pedestrian bridge crosses the railroad near Veirs Mill Road (New Street Bridge) and at Frederick Road (Unity Bridge). The City has on-going programs for pedestrians with traffic signal timing, enforcement of traffic laws, better street design, increased visibility of crosswalks and programs to educate drivers and pedestrians.

## **Housing**

East Rockville has a variety of housing stock of differing ages, sizes and conditions. Almost 90% of East Rockville is single-family housing. The earliest and most historic homes, dating from the late nineteenth century, are in Croydon Park and Rockville Park along Baltimore Road and Reading Avenue. Older homes are much larger, 2-3,000 square feet, with larger lots varying from .25 to .5 acre. Newer homes have recently been constructed on vacant lots along Baltimore Road and throughout the



neighborhood. Housing on the eastern side of the neighborhood in Maryvale and Harriett Park Subdivisions is generally newer, usually built during the 1950s or 60s, and smaller, with 1-1,500 square foot homes on 5-6,000 square foot lots. Small lots are common making up over 50% of the total lots in East Rockville. Burgundy Knolls is a subdivision built during the 1960s with 7-12,000 square foot lots and larger 1,500-2,500 sq. ft. houses. Larger lots of 15-17,000 square feet that are 200-400 feet deep were platted along Howard and Crabb Avenues. The deeper lots were created to avoid a small stream that flowed behind them. Redgate Farms, a small townhouse community of 49 units, occupies the northeast corner of the neighborhood.



Housing conditions are generally good to fair with scattered new and restored homes mixed throughout the neighborhood. The housing is in good condition but there are some properties that have maintenance problems, (paint, siding, roofing, fence and porch repair). The Rockville Code Enforcement Division had thirty complaints during the last two years in the East Rockville Neighborhood. The most common violations were for over-sized vehicles, usually trucks, parked in the street or driveways; chipped paint on houses; and rentals without permits. Over 66% of the homes in East Rockville were built before 1955 and that means many will require continual maintenance. The neighborhood is 99% filled with single-family homes, with 3.2 acres vacant.

### **Historic Preservation**

A variety of older homes can be found in East Rockville. The oldest homes, 24 of the city's 38 homes that are older than one hundred years, are along and south of Baltimore Road.



Houses that are listed on the City's historic inventory include five along Baltimore Road, two on Reading Avenue and five on Veirs Mill Road. Two homes along Reading Avenue were part of the first residential expansion of commuter homes built along the rail line after the 1873 expansion of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. The Kingdon Sisters House (206 Reading Avenue) and Rockville Park Cottage (212 Reading Avenue), owned by a railroad agent, were built in "Readings First Addition" now Rockville Park. The Reading

family owned a home, built in 1884 at 308 Baltimore Road, and they promoted expansion of the city east of the railroad during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Three additional homes of the 1890s and 1910s also are still on Baltimore Road along with 1930s era homes like the Bogley-Harper House (304 Baltimore Road). These homes are some of the finest examples of 19<sup>th</sup> century Rockville. The houses are in private ownership, add significant value to the neighborhood and are being well maintained. Janeta Subdivision still has five houses built during 1886 for the original subdivision. They are typical of the architecture of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in Rockville.

Historic buildings are also being preserved in East Rockville. The Pump House that was the early waterworks for the City circa 1897 is now a Community Center. Chestnut Grove Farm is another example of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century home but this was turned into a nursing home for children and is now owned by Montgomery County. Both structures are in good condition and maintain neighborhood quality.

## Commercial and Industrial Areas

The neighborhood is surrounded by industrial and commercial property, most zoned I-1. There is a large industrial site of 112 acres zoned I-1 along Gude Drive. The I-1 Zone allows a wide range of land uses from the most intense industrial uses that includes manufacturing, contractors, auto repair and painting to sales, rentals, animal services and office uses. Although most of the industrial district is light industrial and office, this zone allows salvage yards and manufacturing within a short distance of the neighborhood. A significant amount of truck traffic is generated by this industrial park.

## Parks and Open Space

East Rockville has parks and open space that are enhanced with mature trees that provide an urban tree cover. Maryvale Park has a 4-acre ball field, and an additional 4 acres of open space on both sides of Croydon Creek. The Pump House Community Center has 1.2 acres of land next to the building on South Horners Lane. Grandin Park on Grandin Avenue was recently created as a .4-acre pocket park, and Mary Trumbo Park will soon be improved. These parks serve the central and southern parts of the neighborhood. A large wooded open space was left at the north end of Neal Drive to protect existing trees and reduce runoff from the subdivision, and is known as Northeast



Park. Another open space was created for stormwater detention for the Redgate townhouse development next to Norbeck Road. A total of 15.6 acres of parkland (active) and 4 acres of open space (passive) currently exist in East Rockville. There is currently 18 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents in Rockville with a 50/50 split on active to passive. East Rockville has 6.25 acres for every 1,000 residents with an 80/20 ratio of active to passive space.

## Neighborhood Infrastructure

The City's Public Works Department provides and maintains much of the infrastructure in the neighborhood including public road maintenance, provision and maintenance of sanitary sewers and stormwater conveyance systems, and the provision of public drinking water. The City operates its own drinking water treatment plant on the Potomac River that provides drinking water to most of the City, including East Rockville. The City also operates its own refuse collection service including an extensive recycling program.

The City has the responsibility, as the operator of the stormwater conveyance system, to ensure that non-point source pollution entering the stormdrain system is reduced in



order to minimize the potential for pollutants to enter the natural stream system. The City undertakes educational efforts and conducts watershed studies to identify stormwater management and stream protection projects to improve local watershed health. The Rock Creek watershed study was adopted in 2000 and identified several projects in the East Rockville area to improve stream health. These include the Northeast Park stormwater retrofit project, and stream improvements in Croydon Creek, along with pollution prevention educational efforts.

## **Appendix 2: Community Kickoff Meeting Summary**

**April 4, 2002**

The Community Kick-off Meeting for the East Rockville Neighborhood Plan was held on April 4, 2002 in the Maryvale Elementary School. The purpose of the meeting was to solicit comment from residents on their experiences living in the neighborhood, and to envision its future. Over 1,065 residential properties were notified of the meeting by mail, and over 130 citizens participated. The meeting began with City staff explaining the purpose and agenda of the meeting, as well as the Neighborhood Plan and its process.

A set of designed questions was asked by staff to allow residents to provide information about the positive and negative aspects of the East Rockville neighborhood (see Appendix). The residents were separated into four groups of relatively equal size by random numbering to assure a variety of responses and locations. The average size was about 20-25 residents with staff members to take notes. The questions were intended to let residents to think about positive and negative qualities to allow creative thinking beyond property lines. The questions involved Neighborhood Strengths, Weaknesses related to the current state of the neighborhood, as well as Threats and Opportunities related to the future of the neighborhood. The following is a summary of the comments from all of the groups, with the Appendix including the comments from each of the four groups.

### **Neighborhood Strengths**

The residents were first asked to describe the strengths of their neighborhood. The top four responses were then chosen for each Group. There was a general similarity throughout the groups that gave insight into why residents live in East Rockville. The most frequently mentioned strengths were:

Location This was the most frequently mentioned strength of the East Rockville Neighborhood. The important destinations were the Metro Station and the commuter trains, the Town Center, and within a short commute to Washington and surrounding metropolitan areas, with Town Center becoming more important as redevelopment occurs. Group 1 specifically mentioned Metro access, while Group 2 mentioned the Town Center and commuter access to Washington. Groups 3 and 4 mentioned walking access with Group 4 participants saying location (15 votes) was very important as it offered proximity to Metro, restaurants, the Courthouses, movie theaters and other amenities available in Town Center.

City Services This neighborhood strength was mentioned by all groups. Among the good services identified were libraries, schools, police, animal control, public works and community centers. Groups 1 and 4 both had services as second in importance. Group

4 not only had services mentioned second, they were also listed in seven of the seventeen strengths mentioned. Group 3 had trash collection as second in importance, while Group 2 mentioned City services as a much lower-ranked strength.

Affordable Housing The next strength most mentioned by Groups 1 and 2 was affordable housing. Groups 3 and 4 didn't mention this as a strength. Group 3 identified "stability", which was mentioned as five out of nine in the list of strengths.

Established Community The neighborhood's quality and tradition was expressed by Group 1 as "Generational Continuity" that describes the loyalty and tradition of this neighborhood, and by Group 2 as "Established" neighborhood. Group 2 also mentioned "Good Community feeling..." as important. Group 3 also mentioned "Diversity" and "Stability" as strengths. Group 4 listed "Small Town Feel" and "Look out for neighbors homes..." as important along with "Diversity". Other descriptions such as "Quiet" or "Safe" also indicated that there was a satisfaction with the general quality and atmosphere of the neighborhood.

Other strengths that were commonly mentioned but not as frequently as the top four were the variety of ethnic groups and mixture of age groups. Groups 2 and 3 felt that sidewalks were an important amenity while Group 3 also mentioned street trees. Groups 1, 2 and 4 also mentioned community safety and a responsive city government.

*Comment:* The top four strengths reveal a satisfaction with the neighborhood as a place that is close to central Rockville and to the Metro/MARC rail lines, and as an identifiable community with distinct housing styles. The community expressed pride in the neighborhood tradition and residents, with ethnic variety and age variation were considered an asset. The neighborhood seems to have a unity and identifies itself as a single area. The residents were able to identify common problems and generally agree on a common direction for the future.

## **Neighborhood Weaknesses**

The Groups also listed weaknesses of their neighborhood, which generated a list of concerns about the current state of the community. The following are the top four concerns:

Traffic The most common issue was traffic congestion or traffic-related noise. Group 1 and 4 had traffic as the top concern. Group 4 had more concerns about noise, especially along Route 28, while Group 1 had a variety of traffic concerns from speed and congestion on North Horners Lane to pedestrian crossing problems on Route 28. Commercial traffic along Stonestreet Avenue was also a problem for Group 1 residents. Group 2 mentioned "Traffic Congestion (within neighborhood)" and "Speeding on neighborhood streets" but this was not viewed as important as crime and inadequate retail services. Group 3 had the lowest level of traffic complaints with "Pedestrian crossings" and "Speed of traffic" rating below "Uncontrolled pets" and "Sewer infrastructure" in importance.

Code Enforcement The second most commonly mentioned problem relates to housing maintenance and city enforcement of housing standards. The lack of property maintenance and code enforcement was the top concern of Group 3 and second for Group 1. Group 4 had a variety of complaints that all related to maintenance and code enforcement: "Deteriorating houses", "Weak inspection services", "Trash in Yards" and "Junk Collections", etc. Group 2 mentioned "Lack of maintenance on houses and yards" as important. Groups 1 and 3 described concerns about rental properties not being maintained as well as owner-occupied housing. Residential overcrowding within single-family homes was also mentioned by Groups 2 and 4.

Sanitary Sewer The next most frequently mentioned problem was sewer back-ups. Groups 3 and 4 were the only Groups to mention this. Group 4 felt that this was not as major a concern as other issues, and listed it below "Parking on sidewalks", while Group 3 saw sewer problems as the third worst problem behind property maintenance and safety.

Parking and North Stonestreet Avenue Businesses The variety of responses creates difficulty in selecting the top four most mentioned weaknesses so both parking and North Stonestreet Avenue business were combined. Group 1 and 3 both mentioned North Stonestreet Avenue as a problem while Groups 2 and 4 felt lack of adequate parking was more of a weakness. Group 4 also mentioned "too many cars" and "car repairs and maintenance." Group 1 felt that the appearance of North Stonestreet Avenue could be improved and the traffic reduced while Group 3 mentioned "Density" of business uses.

Other weaknesses mentioned included insufficient retail services, crime around Metro, street lighting, tree trimming, loud neighbors, trash in yards and lack of sidewalks.

*Comment:* The neighborhood identified obvious problems that are encountered on a daily basis. Study will need to be accomplished to understand the true depth of these perceived problems. East Rockville is bordered by heavy traffic use corridors, light industrial and commercial districts. The other identifiable problem is housing deterioration, which is accentuated by the often wide variation in property maintenance within the same block. The important City service for an older neighborhood, code enforcement, was a source of complaint, and should be referred to the appropriate agency for action outside of the Neighborhood Plan process. The issue of parking may be the most difficult problem to solve. Although the Stonestreet Avenue commercial district is seen as an "eyesore" that should be redeveloped and upgraded with new standards, this must be done carefully so as not to conflict with concerns about high density and commercial conflicts.

## Opportunities

The next stage of the meeting asked residents to look to the future and talk about Opportunities and Threats to the neighborhood. The answers were more general and speculative in nature.

Improve Neighborhood Appearance All of the Groups mentioned this opportunity with 1 and 2 having it as their first priority. Group 4 listed it second, with such related issues as "Increase pride (....Beautification Committee)". Group 3 ranked "Improved Appearance of neighborhood" third on their list.

Strengthen Community Groups 1, 2 and 3 all stated this opportunity in different ways. Group 1 felt that there was an opportunity to reduce traffic impacts, eliminate commercial conflicts and improve neighborhood unity, while Group 2 said "...redevelopment should serve a function for the neighborhood." Group 3 chose to underscore the single family qualities and request that housing be respected by redevelopment. Group 4 described specific tasks, such as traffic enforcement, rather than general goals.

Pedestrian and Bike Connections This is important to all of the Groups except 3. Group 1 saw pedestrian movement and circulation as an important part of redevelopment opportunities in Town Center, access to Metro and across Route 28. Group 2 mentioned only the Town Center while Group 4 mentioned the "Downtown."

Recreation All groups listed recreation except for Group 4, which felt that noise reduction and "Compatible Character of Housing" was important. Outdoor lighting and more facilities were listed by Group 1 while just "...activities in parks" and "Enhanced Parks" were mentioned by Group 2. Group 3 wanted "Recreational Opportunity."

Other noted Opportunities were traffic and parking enforcement, improved infrastructure, noise reduction, and additional retail and employment opportunities. Group 2 listed a better library as an opportunity.

*Comment:* Neighborhood appearance is an important part of pride and tradition that are identified strengths of the community. The residents seemed to agree that there is opportunity to improve the general neighborhood appearance with redevelopment and specific appearance of properties with code enforcement. Residents were quick to think beyond their own properties and create broad concepts for the entire neighborhood to strengthen the community. Residents saw the opportunity to revise and expand current bicycle and pedestrian pathways to improve their function and quality. Recreation space was seen as good but functionally limited. An approach is needed that incorporates new activities that could also involve additional space to provide easy access for all residents.

## Challenges

The Threats were considered to be the Weaknesses portion of Opportunities where citizens were concentrating on future problems and concerns.

Redevelopment All Groups except Group 4 felt that redevelopment held future danger and must be carefully controlled. Group 1 felt lack of citizen participation as its top fear and bad redevelopment as its second. Group 2 felt incompatible development was most threatening. Group 3 was also worried about redevelopment but mainly for the Metro station. Group 4 viewed current issues such as traffic, crime and parking lot conversion of residential lots with the most concern.

Crime Crime was a general concern of all residential property owners and common to these groups. The Metro was most commonly identified as a potential crime area by all Groups except 3. Group 4 mentioned prostitution and drugs specifically. Group 2 mentioned vagrants in parks and potential crime at Metro. This would be consistent as a threat to the strengths mentioned (safe and quiet) for the neighborhood. Group 3 was more afraid of deteriorating housing.

Parking Lots and Parking Groups 3 and 4 viewed the redevelopment of the Metro as a direct conflict if more parking and traffic were created. Although not directly expressed, redevelopment impacts were also of concern to the other Groups. Group 1 describes "Threats from Density" and Group 2 "Incompatible over-development and traffic..." Institutional uses and their parking lots were also cited as threats by Groups 2 and 3.

Traffic Although a current problem, traffic increases are considered a threat by almost all of the Groups. Group 4 specifically mentions "Traffic" as the second threat while Groups 1 and 2 mention traffic as a potential threat from redevelopment. Group 2 also had a fear of traffic generated from a reconnection of Baltimore Road to East Rockville. Group 3 did not mention traffic.

Other threats include: deteriorating housing, lack of citizen participation, lack of police presence, subdivision of current lots into smaller lots, new homes that don't fit the current size and style, increase in rentals and decline in school quality.

*Comment:* The residents know there will be continual redevelopment of central Rockville and the non-residential areas surrounding the Metro station. Metro redevelopment is seen as the most likely problem because of traffic and parking conflicts. Citizens don't want poorly-conceived redevelopment, but are open to redevelopment that addresses concerns, clearly indicating citizen involvement will be critical for a successful Metro station. Crime was not a current threat but a perceived threat that will be increased by Metro station and redevelopment. This perception must be addressed for the success of the Metro redevelopment and neighborhood plan. Residents are opposed to parking and traffic intrusion, as residents see traffic as dividing the neighborhood and hurting the quality of life. A transportation plan must be created for this neighborhood to amplify the current Master Plan recommendations.



Traffic was continually mentioned as a nuisance and must be managed inside the neighborhood, while traffic on the edge of the neighborhood is also a problem for pedestrians and as a noise source. Route 28, Stonestreet Avenue, Horners Lane, Norbeck Road and Gude Drive are all mentioned as high volume, high noise corridors surrounding this neighborhood. More unmanaged traffic would cause a decline in property values and reduce the quality of life in the neighborhood.

## Individual Group Results

These questions were asked to a group of 15-20 residents of East Rockville. The questions are in ***bold italics*** and the answers in normal type. The answers were ranked first to last in terms of their importance, as ranked by the consensus of the group. Note that Group 1 did not vote, while Groups 2, 3 and 4 results include the vote totals for each item.

### Group 1 Results

#### ***How do you use the neighborhood?***

Residents- almost all

Home occupation- 3

Elementary School students- 2

Own property along Stonestreet Ave -1

#### *Strengths*

⌘ Location

⌘ Clean Safe

⌘ Metro access

#### *Excellent City Services*

⌘ Libraries

⌘ Schools

⌘ Police

⌘ Public Works

⌘ Animal Control

#### *Affordable Housing*

⌘ Good neighborhood

#### *Generational Continuity*

⌘ Sense of place

⌘ Loyalty to neighborhood

⌘ Traditional neighborhood

*Weaknesses*

*Traffic both residential and commercial*

- ⌘ 28 and Veirs Mill difficult to cross
- ⌘ 28 at Baltimore Rd difficult to cross
- ⌘ Speed of traffic through residential area
- ⌘ N. Horners traffic
- ⌘ Commercial traffic through neighborhood
- ⌘ Commercial along 28 and Norbeck Rd. noisy
- ⌘ Commercial trucks and vans along Stonestreet and in neighborhood

*Property Code Violations*

- ⌘ Property up-keep
- ⌘ Large variation in property maintenance
- ⌘ Rented worse than owned property

*City not Enforcing Codes*

- ⌘ Must call to get inspection
- ⌘ Cars and houses in violation

*North Stonestreet Ave business does not look good*

- ⌘ Hurts property value
- ⌘ Reflects on entire neighborhood perception

*Opportunities*

*Improve Appearance of the Neighborhood*

- ⌘ Overall Neighborhood
- ⌘ Utilities should be removed
- ⌘ Improve housing
- ⌘ Improve north Stonestreet Ave

*Strengthen Community*

- ⌘ Make street friendlier (reduce threat of traffic)
- ⌘ Commercial conflicts
- ⌘ Create community (neighborhood) unity

*Better pedestrian Movement with redevelopment*

- ⌘ Connection over Rockville Pike
- ⌘ Better linkage to Metro
- ⌘ Make crossing points more visible and mark with signs
- ⌘ Traffic crossing for pedestrians on Rt. 28

*Improve Community Recreation*

- ⌘ Lighting for night play
- ⌘ More variety of activities
- ⌘ Need possible indoor recreation

*Threats (Fears)*

*No Input from Citizens on important decisions for redevelopment*

- ⌘ Metro Development
- ⌘ Raises taxes without improvement to neighborhood
- ⌘ Impacts area with traffic or users

*Redevelopment*

- ⌘ Being bought-out for intense development
- ⌘ Being taxed-out by improvements
- ⌘ Traffic increases with pedestrian, parking and vehicular increase

*Increase in drug related crime*

- ⌘ Crime Watch needed
- ⌘ Keep people informed on how to prevent problems
- ⌘ May be related to transit

*High Rise High Density construction as infill near Metro or N. Stonestreet*

- ⌘ Appearance
- ⌘ Impacts from density

*General Issues Of Concern*

*Redevelopment of commercial and Metro*

- ⌘ Fear parking would increase
- ⌘ Fear of tall ugly building
- ⌘ Overcrowding and traffic

*Home Restoration and Maintenance*

- ⌘ Maintain code
- ⌘ Need standards for maintenance
- ⌘ Variation between owner and rental property

*Parks and Open Space*

- ⌘ Need variety and new activities
- ⌘ Need parking at park site
- ⌘ Maintenance of facilities
- ⌘ More furniture and trash containers

≠ Lighting for night use

*Community Facilities*

≠ More publicity about programs and locations

≠ Greater variety of activities

*Connections*

≠ Pedestrian bridge at courthouse feels unfriendly

≠ Lack of direct access for pedestrians

≠ Need more pedestrian friendly access across 355 to Down Town

≠ Access under Park Road is threatening for pedestrians

≠ Pedestrian crossing at Norbeck Rd. and RT. 28 is needed

*Historical Preservation*

≠ No opinion and very little knowledge

**Group 2 Results**

*Strengths*

≠ Conveniently located to Rockville Town Center and DC (15)

≠ Affordable Housing (9)

≠ Established (8)

≠ Good Public Transportation(8)

≠ Support for Seniors (8)

≠ Majority single family owner-occupied (8)

≠ Mixture of age groups – families, older (7)

≠ Safe Neighborhood (6)

≠ Good Community feeling – stable (3), active (3), neighbors

≠ Good City services (5)

≠ Community policing (5)

≠ Variety of Ethnic Groups (4)

≠ Sidewalks (3)

≠ Proactive civic association (3)

≠ Personalized Houses (1)

*Weaknesses*

≠ Vagrants and loitering (New Street bridge, Horners and Howard, Lincoln Street at Maryvale Market and Mt. Calvary Church, North Horners) (14)

≠ Crime in and around neighborhood (Metro) (12)

≠ Existing commercial doesn't serve community (Janeta's, North Stonestreet, liquor stores, Maryvale Market) (11)

≠ Speeding on neighborhood streets (9)

≠ Lack of hardware store (9)

- ⌘ Traffic congestion (within neighborhood) (8)
- ⌘ Poor street lighting (North Horners Lane, First Street) (6)
- ⌘ Parking problems near Metro (cars on sidewalk, etc.) (6)
- ⌘ Lack of maintenance on houses and yards (6)
- ⌘ [Should be] More signs limiting/prohibiting truck traffic (5)
- ⌘ Trash containers not used, trash not put out on right day (5)
- ⌘ Leaves raked to curb too early (5)
- ⌘ Lack of enforcement of truck limits (3)
- ⌘ Lack of sidewalk on Stonestreet Avenue (3)
- ⌘ Bus traffic – excessive speed, too many not-in-service buses, too much use of neighborhood streets, stopping at unmarked stops (3)
- ⌘ Parking on Stonestreet (line of sight, metering?) (3)
- ⌘ Use of Jake-brakes within City (First Street, Stonestreet Avenue) (2)
- ⌘ Excessive litter and trash in roads and parks (2)
- ⌘ More than one family in homes (2)
- ⌘ Pedestrian crossing needed at Crabb Avenue for access to Town Center (1)
- ⌘ Construction without permits (1)
- ⌘ Public Schools – quality (0)
- ⌘ Pedestrians in streets (0)
- ⌘ Sidewalks should be retrofitted with ramps for ADA (0)
- ⌘ Enforcement of permit parking (0)

### *Opportunities*

- ⌘ More attractive development on Stonestreet Avenue could include mixed-use development (apartments and stores) with limits for neighborhood compatibility (20)
- ⌘ Planning for commercial redevelopment should serve a function for the neighborhood, including neighborhood-serving retail and employment opportunities (7)
- ⌘ Better pedestrian connections to redeveloped Town Center (6)
- ⌘ Better Library (5)
- ⌘ Metro redevelopment could provide more amenities (4)
- ⌘ Opportunities for kids' activities in parks (3)
- ⌘ Enhanced parks (3)
- ⌘ Attractive activities in Town Center (1)
- ⌘ More activities at Pumphouse (1)
- ⌘ Continued community input (0)

### *Threats*

- ⌘ Incompatible overdevelopment (height, density, traffic) (14)
- ⌘ Connecting Baltimore Road across railroad tracks would change the character of the neighborhood with increased traffic (speed and safety concerns) (13)
- ⌘ Nonresidential encroachment, especially industrial and institutional uses (8)
- ⌘ Vagrants and other improper uses of parks (6)
- ⌘ Citizen participation in Metro development (5)

- ⌘ Change in character of industrial zoning (4)
- ⌘ School quality could decline (2)
- ⌘ Increased crime at Metro (2)
- ⌘ Upgrades to MD 28 could impact neighborhood (1)
- ⌘ Change of character (0)

### Group 3 Results

#### *How do you use the neighborhood?*

- ⌘ Residents- almost all
- ⌘ Home occupation-
- ⌘ Elementary School students-
- ⌘ Own property along Stonestreet Ave -

#### *Strengths*

- ⌘ Walking Access
- ⌘ Trash Collection
- ⌘ Off Street Parking
- ⌘ Diversity
- ⌘ Stability
- ⌘ Sidewalks
- ⌘ Proximity to Metro
- ⌘ Convenience to shopping and hospital
- ⌘ Mature trees

#### *Weaknesses*

- ⌘ Code enforcement
- ⌘ Institutional uses loitering and safety
- ⌘ Rental not maintained
- ⌘ Sewer infrastructure (back-ups)
- ⌘ Uncontrolled pets
- ⌘ Pedestrian crossings
- ⌘ Loud neighbors
- ⌘ Setbacks and no adequate zoning
- ⌘ Density and Stonestreet business
- ⌘ Speed of traffic
- ⌘ Aging trees
- ⌘ Foreclosures Section 8

#### *Opportunities*

- ⌘ Single Family neighborhood
- ⌘ Police enforcement of traffic and parking
- ⌘ Improved appearance of neighborhood
- ⌘ Improve infrastructure



≠# Recreational opportunities

### *Threats*

- ≠# Metro parking and redevelopment
- ≠# Church institutional uses
- ≠# Deteriorating housing

## **Group 4 Results**

### *Strengths*

- ≠# Location, location, location (8) – Proximity to Metro, restaurants, Courthouse, amenities, movie theaters (5) walking distance (2); (15)
- ≠# Excellent City Services (6) - Street trees (0), Snow plowing (2), Leaf Pick-up (2), Quick response to sewer problems (1); (11)
- ≠# Twice a week trash pick-up (8)
- ≠# Bulk trash pick-up (7)
- ≠# Quiet streets (6)
- ≠# Animal Control (Wildlife – collection of dead animals and birds) (5)
- ≠# Look out for neighbor's homes when not in town (4)
- ≠# Small Town Feel (4)
- ≠# Police, fire and ambulance service (4)
- ≠# Diversity of population (4)
- ≠# Great choice of churches (2)
- ≠# Government is approachable and listens (2)
- ≠# Great choice of schools (2)
- ≠# Safe streets (1)
- ≠# City water and sewer (1)
- ≠# Lots of grandparents – built-in neighborhood watch (1)
- ≠# Good Telecommunications (0)

### *Weaknesses*

- ≠# Traffic noise (Route 28, East Gude Drive, First Street) – trucks, congestion reduces noise, can't use backyard (24)
- ≠# Trash in yards (14)
- ≠# Junk collections in yards – inspections only in front (11)
- ≠# Deteriorating Houses (11)
- ≠# Parking on sidewalks (10)
- ≠# Sewer backup (due to grease buildup from others, old and undersized) (7)
- ≠# Residential overcrowding (6)
- ≠# Cut-through traffic (6)
- ≠# Residential overcrowding: fire hazards, excessive trash, too many cars, environmental concerns about car repairs and maintenance (6)
- ≠# High grass (5)

- ⌘ Street lighting – Crabb Avenue, Stonestreet, Metro, Burgundy (5)
- ⌘ Leaving trash in front yard (5)
- ⌘ Excess speed on Route 28 (4)
- ⌘ Rats (4)
- ⌘ Junk cars (3)
- ⌘ Tree trimming – not removing dead branches and maintenance at power lines (3)
- ⌘ Weak inspection services (2)
- ⌘ City Inspection Services suck (0)
- ⌘ Bullies in the Park (0)

#### *Opportunities*

- ⌘ Traffic enforcement – speed bumps, stop signs (11)
- ⌘ Increase pride (create awards, Beautification Committee) (7)
- ⌘ Better bike and pedestrian access to Downtown (5)
- ⌘ Noise reduction (5)
- ⌘ Compatible character of housing – size, square footage, affordable (3)

#### *Threats*

- ⌘ Parking lots in residential areas (9)
- ⌘ Traffic (5)
- ⌘ Increase in rentals (5)
- ⌘ Prostitution (4)
- ⌘ Metro crime seems to be increasing (3)
- ⌘ Lack of police presence (3)
- ⌘ Drugs (3)
- ⌘ Subdivision of Lots into smaller lots (2)
- ⌘ New big houses out of character (2)
- ⌘ Building up Metro (1)

#### *Issues*

- ⌘ Different issues within subdivisions (threats and weaknesses can vary by location)
- ⌘ Better public relations regarding neighborhood associations and meetings – on alternate day of the week

### ***Appendix 3: Historic Preservation In Rockville***

In 1900, when Rockville had 1,100 residents, you could walk across town in no time. With population growth and annexations, the City has grown to its current population of over 50,000 people in an area extending in every direction from Town Center. How has Rockville changed over time? What contributions have people made in the past for which we are grateful today? These are some of the questions people ask about Rockville's history. One way to answer these questions is by studying the results of the Historic Preservation tools that have been developed and employed over the past 40 years. This section outlines various means of preserving Rockville's history through conserving its built environment.

Efforts to preserve historic resources in Rockville relied primarily on private initiatives until 1966, when the Mayor and Council established the Historic District Commission (HDC). The HDC is composed of five commissioners appointed by the Mayor and Council for three-year terms. Commissioners must be qualified through their education, knowledge, training, or demonstrated interest in fields such as history, preservation, architecture or urban design. The HDC is charged with recommending areas for designation, which meet the criteria for historic districts. The Annotated Code of Maryland establishes five purposes for historic designation that have also been adopted by Rockville. They are:

- ⌘ Safeguarding the heritage of Rockville by preserving districts that reflect cultural, social, economic, political, or architectural history;
- ⌘ Stabilizing and improving property values within these districts;
- ⌘ Fostering civic beauty;
- ⌘ Strengthening the local economy; and
- ⌘ Promoting the use and preservation of historic districts for the education, welfare, and pleasure of the residents of Rockville.

Historic district zoning is implemented through a sectional map amendment to the official City zoning map. Historic district (HD) zoning is an overlay zone defining historic districts (single-site or multiple-site) that reflect the cultural, social, economic, political, or architectural heritage of the city. The underlying zone and permitted use do not change. Only the Planning Commission or Mayor and Council may initiate sectional map amendments to create a historic district, although property owners may request that the Mayor and Council initiate the process.

Although there is not a historic district in the neighborhood, there are currently four single-site historic districts in East Rockville:

- ⌘ 300 Reading Avenue - *Carey and Hattie Kingdon House* (1893); 2-1/2 story wood frame house with prominent cross-gable roof and full-width



front porch; associated with the Kingdon family; designated in 2001;

# 550 Reading Avenue - *The Addie and John Maddox House (Homewood)* (ca. 1900); 2-1/2 story wood frame stuccoed house, with front-facing gable, and a full-width front porch with arched openings; associated with the Maddox family; designated in 2002;

# 701 Grandin Avenue - *The Hipsley-Thompson House* (ca. 1893); a Victorian gothic revival style wood frame house, with prominent center gable and full-width front porch; designated in 2002; and

# 709 Grandin Avenue – *The Corrick-Robertson House* (ca. 1893); a Victorian gothic revival style wood frame house, with prominent center gable and decorative polygonal two-story bay; designated in 2003.



In addition, the B&O Railroad Historic District, with the Baldwin-designed railroad station, is on the west side of the tracks, but clearly relates to the history and development of East Rockville.

### **Historic Preservation Tools for Neighborhood Stabilization**

These “tools for preservation” are options and choices that are available to individuals to preserve buildings, sites, landmarks, and neighborhoods that make up Rockville’s identity. Some options involve local government and citizen review boards, while other options involve individual and private commitments. Although zoning is used to define setbacks and building height, historic preservation can go further to encourage compatible new construction that complements older neighborhoods. For neighborhood preservation, historic preservation methods and processes are an effective way to analyze existing communities and, working with overall zoning, produce an effective plan to stabilize, strengthen, and preserve the character of the neighborhood. The method starts with an accurate inventory and assessment of the individual buildings as sited along the streets. Paired with a developmental history, cohesive areas of distinctive can be identified.

The City of Rockville has long had a commitment to the preservation of its history, and strives to provide information to its citizens to enable them to make choices. The following is a summary of the four basic tools that can be used alone or combined to suit neighborhood goals: National Register of Historic Places Listing, Rockville Historic District Designation, Conservation District overlay, and Easement donation.

### **National Register of Historic Places Listing**

Listing in the National Register is a great honor and provides recognition of the national and/or local significance of a site. Design review is required ONLY if federal funds or permits are involved, or if the property owner wishes to take advantage of federal tax

credits offered for rehabilitation work. The National Register of Historic Places recognizes districts, buildings, structures, objects, and sites for their significance in American history, archeology, architecture, engineering, or culture, and identifies them as worthy of preservation. Established by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register listing is maintained by the National Park Service, in cooperation with the State Historic Preservation Office. In Maryland, this is the Maryland Historical Trust. Owners of properties listed in the National Register may be eligible for state and federal financial assistance for maintenance and rehabilitation work.

Many states and communities, including the City of Rockville, use National Register listing as the backbone of their preservation planning processes and designation criteria. In the past, Rockville has combined National Register and local district designation to add an additional measure of protection through the design review and approval process, while assuring the widest range of options for financial benefits to the property owners. This currently includes a 10% local property tax credit on costs for exterior maintenance work; 20% state income tax credit on approved interior and exterior rehabilitation work; and, 20% federal income tax credit (on income-producing properties only) for approved interior and exterior rehabilitation work.

### **Rockville Historic District Designation**

While National Register listing will not typically involve design review (except when tax benefits are sought), local jurisdictions and the City of Rockville require design review of owner-proposed alterations for local districts. Nationally, more than 2,300 districts have historic preservation commissions that conduct design review. One of the best ways to keep the look and feel of the place called "home" is through a local design review process.

The City of Rockville has adopted designation criteria based on the criteria for placement on the National Register of Historic Places: historical, cultural, architectural, and design significance. Archaeological sites are also eligible. Structures representing architectural styles, periods, and methods of construction that have particular significance to Rockville are given special attention. Integrity of workmanship and materials are considered, as well as cultural significance. A 50-year "rule" generally applies, but there may be exceptions for buildings/sites, which are particularly significant.

If the site is found to meet one or more of the adopted criteria, the level of site significance (local, state or national) is determined and the condition of the structure and site is evaluated. Single site historic districts stand alone, and are held to the highest standard. Within a multiple-site district, properties are identified as outstanding, contributing or non-contributing in terms of their significance, and reviewed accordingly. After designation, any exterior changes to the property must be approved by the Historic District Commission through design review.

**Benefits of Local Historic Districts**

- Local districts protect the investments of owners and residents. Buyers know that the aspects that make a particular area attractive will be protected over a period of time. Real estate agents in many cities use historic district status as a marketing tool to sell properties.
- Local districts encourage better design. It has been shown through comparative studies that there is a greater sense of relatedness, more innovative use of materials, and greater public appeal within historic districts than in areas without historic designations.
- Local districts help the environment. Historic district revitalization can, and should, be part of a comprehensive environmental policy.
- The educational benefits of creating local districts are the same as those derived from any historic preservation effort. Districts help explain the development of a place, the source of inspiration, and technological advances. They are a record of our communities and ourselves.
- A local district can result in a positive economic impact from tourism. A historic district that is aesthetically cohesive and well promoted can be a community's most important attraction. The retention of historic areas as a way to attract tourist dollars makes good economic sense.
- The protection of local historic districts can enhance business recruitment potential. Companies continually re-locate to communities that offer their workers a higher quality of life, which is greatly enhanced by successful local preservation programs and stable historic districts.
- Local districts provide social and psychological benefits. A sense of empowerment and confidence develops when community decisions are made through a structured participatory process rather than behind closed doors or without public comment.

*Excerpted and adapted from Maintaining Community Character: How to Establish a Local Historic District by Pratt Cassity. National Trust for Historic Preservation. 2000.*

**Conservation District**

Historic designation is no longer the only option available to communities wishing to preserve and maintain the characteristics of their older neighborhoods. Beginning in the 1980s overlay conservation districts were enabled by ordinance in many jurisdictions. These districts, like local historic districts, seek to conserve and maintain the existing character of a neighborhood, but apply a lesser degree of regulation on individual homes. In many cases, a review process is still required, and some jurisdictions establish separate neighborhood review boards and district-specific guidelines for each Conservation District. Other jurisdictions rely on the local Historic District Commission because of their experience with design review. Conservation districts are specifically tailored to an area, and may only require review of new construction, demolition, or additions to buildings, with reliance on community-approved design guidelines for the details.



Conservation Districts can satisfy the need for a neighborhood program that would maintain and conserve the character-defining streetscapes of established neighborhoods, and help to preserve the supply of affordable housing for the current residents. This is not intended to replace the historic preservation program, and Conservation Districts do not qualify for Historic Preservation financial support, such as tax credits. They do, however, offer an alternative in many areas that have experienced some deterioration, demolition, or incompatible alterations to housing stock, and where there are ongoing development pressures that could dislocate populations or cause broad changes in the neighborhood. Guidelines tailored to the specific area are a key component. Another key component is community support. Conservation districts do not succeed unless the community actively supports the program. Some incentives, such as workshops, revolving loan funds, grants and free design consulting may help. For many neighborhoods, stability and clear future direction are incentive enough.

### **Easement Donation**

Easements are executed by the property owner and are used to gain financial advantage from a property without altering the environmental setting. A preservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement that protects a significant historic, archaeological, or cultural resource and provides assurance that the property's intrinsic character and values will be preserved by subsequent owners. The easement can be donated to any qualified easement holding organization, such as a local land trust, local historical society, or even the City.

An entire historic structure or just the facade or interior may qualify. Under the terms of an easement, a property owner grants an interest in the property to an organization whose mission includes historic preservation, while retaining ownership of the property. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) guidelines suggest that in many cases a facade easement can be appraised at approximately 10-15 percent of the value of the property. Once recorded, an easement becomes part of the property's chain of title and "runs with the land" in perpetuity. The donation may qualify for a Federal income tax deduction equivalent to the value of the property interest given away, and the donor may also benefit from reduced property assessments and reduced estate taxes. IRS criteria include documentation that the building is a "certified historic structure," and listing in the National Register is the fastest way to meet that requirement.

An easement is a particularly useful historic preservation tool in several respects.

- ## First, it allows an individual to retain private ownership of the property and obtain potential financial benefits without sale.
- ## Second, an easement binds not only the current owner, but future owners as well, ensuring that the property will be maintained and preserved.
- ## Third, easements are tailored to meet the needs of the property owner, the individual resource, and the mission of the protecting organization.

The value of the easement is based on the difference between the appraised fair market value of the property prior to conveying an easement and its value with the easement restrictions in place. Under most circumstances the value of an easement depends upon the property's development potential and operates under the assumption that an easement limits development, thereby reducing the value of the property. For further guidance on determining the value of an easement a professional appraiser should be consulted.

### **Survey Initiative**

To determine eligibility of individual properties for any of the preservation tools, a Survey Initiative for East Rockville will be undertaken beginning in 2003. The survey area includes those portions of Planning Area 1 along Stonestreet Avenue, and Planning Area 2. The survey will include the documentation of the context that identifies themes specific to East Rockville's history. This will be based on the *Standards and Guidelines for Architectural and Historical Investigations in Maryland*, developed by the Maryland Historical Trust. Possible themes include the subdivision process, builders and developers, City annexation process, Community planning efforts that focus on infrastructure and connections, architecture, social history and transportation. Historic research of these themes, the evaluation of individual buildings, and an assessment of archaeological potential will be undertaken. Survey forms for individual properties will include photography and architectural descriptions.

Community involvement is important, and community contributions throughout the survey are invited. The survey data will be presented in draft form to the community, with staff recommendations based on historic significance, as well as architectural and site integrity. Design guidelines will also be drafted for community review and comment. Although no sites will be designated without the consent of the property owners, it is anticipated that there could be a core historic district with multiple resources in the Baltimore Road vicinity, with single-site historic districts in isolated locations. It is hoped that recommendations for historic district designation, as well as National Register nominations, would be ready for consideration in 2004.